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How Strong Is the Leader?

By Thomas H. Rigby

THAT NIKITA KHRUSHCHEV is the universal representative and spokesman of the Soviet regime is obvious to all. That he is also the most important political figure in the USSR is not open to serious doubt. Opinions may differ, however, on the *extent* of his predominance. Are we justified in speaking of Khrushchev as *the* leader or *the* ruler of the Soviet Union, and regarding the other top officials of the Soviet state and Communist Party as his "lieutenants" or "aides"? Or should we rather think of him as merely the most influential of a group of leaders who substantially delimit and share his power? This problem was ably explored by Mr. Richard Lowenthal and Mr. Robert Conquest in a vigorous discussion in the pages of this journal in 1960.[1] Two years later, the issue is still very much alive.

This article is concerned primarily with one area of evidence on the question, namely the make-up of the inner decision-making bodies of the Soviet regime and their changing relationships. In the opinion of the writer, such evidence strongly contradicts the view that Khrushchev's power remains severely limited. If, as Mr. Lowenthal pointed out in the discussion just cited, the argument from Khrushchev's institutional strength was compelling at the time of the May 1960 Plenum of the Central Committee, it has become even more so since the 22nd Congress. We will attempt to document this assertion below, but in order better to appreciate its significance, we should first briefly review the history of the principal Soviet decision-making organs over the past decade, and examine how they relate to Khrushchev's changing fortunes.

In Stalin's time the despotic nature of his rule was reflected in, and continually reinforced by, his arbitrary manipulation of the top political bodies of the party and the state. From the time of the *Yezhovshchina,* the popular image of the Politburo as the ruling collective corresponded less and less to reality. Stalin had life-and-death power over the members as well as the power to exclude them from the Politburo's current deliberations if they incurred his displeasure. He also personally determined whether any particular action should be channelled through the Politburo or through one of the several other permanent and ephemeral inner bodies amongst which the twenty-odd top officials of the party and the state were distributed. Stalin further enhanced his maneuverability in October 1952 by replacing the Politburo with a much larger Presidium and a smaller, unpublicized bureau within it.

Rules of the Collective Leadership

These amorphous arrangements were clearly incompatible with the stability of the oligarchy which established itself after Stalin's death. It was essential for the members of the oligarchy to identify themselves clearly with a particular organ of rule, whose authority would be unambiguous, and whose decisions would be channelled through a simplified and formalized set of subordinate organs. Hence the Presidium of the Central Committee was drastically reduced in size, and the ten leaders who retained full membership in it constituted the new ruling oligarchy or "collective leadership." Below the Central Committee Presidium, a single small executive body was retained both on the party side—the Secretariat—and on the government side—the Presidium of the Council of Ministers.

[1] See *Problems of Communism,* July-August 1960.

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A second obvious essential for the stability of the oligarchy was that no one of its members should enjoy too great a concentration of executive power. So far as membership of the inner decision-making organs was concerned, this meant that, once Malenkov was forced to resign from his party secretaryship, no member of the Central Committee Presidium was permitted a seat in *both* the Secretariat *and* the government Presidium. Moreover, care was taken that the oligarchs with places in either of these two lesser bodies did not form a majority of the Presidium members, for this would have enabled them to form a cabal to control Presidium business and reduce its other members to a subordinate role. To be precise, by July 1953 four of the nine CC Presidium members were in the government Presidium (Malenkov, Molotov, Kaganovich and Bulganin), while only one (Khrushchev) was in the Central Committee Secretariat. This arithmetic proved to be of the greatest value to Khrushchev, as we shall see.

There is considerable negative evidence that the Presidium of the Council of Ministers did not function beyond the early months of 1954.[2] There may be more than one reason for this. The role of this body was greatly narrowed by the removal of Beria and the transfer of control of police matters to the CC Presidium as a whole; furthermore, responsibility within the oligarchy for another important range of business, namely agriculture, was held primarily by Khrushchev, who was not in the Council of Ministers.

But there was another important factor. In keeping with the tendency in the latter years of Stalin's rule, most of the members of the post-Stalin oligarchy had taken charge of different areas of the central government (rather than, *e.g.*, the party) administration. In late 1953 and 1954 this applied to seven out of the nine full members of the CC Presidium. However, for reasons mentioned above, only four of these seven were members of the government Presidium, and it was clearly intolerable for the other three, who were now all Deputy Premiers and in any case were theoretically equal members of the "collective leadership," that they should be excluded from participation in top-level government decisions. The three who were left out were thus equally as eager as Khrushchev to have the party Presidium discuss important matters that had come up for decision through government channels. The operational rules which evolved in 1954-55 permitted each of the First Deputy and Deputy Premiers a fair degree of autonomy within those sectors of the government under his jurisdiction; matters of lesser importance requiring joint consultation were handled by a Current Affairs Commission of the Council of Ministers; and more important issues were passed to the CC Presidium. The Presidium of the Council of Ministers seems to have atrophied as a functioning inner cabinet.[3]

The advantages of this situation for Khrushchev are obvious. Not only was government business split up between seven different "oligarchs" whose interests often conflicted, but the atrophy of the government Presidium meant that Khrushchev's rivals were prevented from welding the government machine into a unified force in the power struggle, while he, as a member of the CC Presidium, was ensured participation in deciding all major government issues. Meanwhile Khrushchev himself, who was not only First Secretary but, more important, the only Presidium member with a place in the Central Committee Secretariat, was able to direct the whole party apparatus practically as his fief and could largely control what party business did and what did not come up for discussion in the Presidium. The political value of this situation was probably little impaired by the election of party secretary Suslov to the Presidium in July 1955, as the latter seems to have been innocent of any concern for internal matters of organization and personnel, which were the vital commodities here.[4]

Khrushchev's Drive for Power

These factors go far towards explaining Khrushchev's position as *primus inter pares,* which he had assumed well before the attempt of his fellow "oligarchs" to curb him in June 1957. At the same time the impact of these factors was greatly enhanced by his vigorous exploitation of the organizational opportunities which his responsibilities for the party apparatus and for agriculture

[2] This evidence is discussed in T. H. Rigby and L. G. Churchward, *Policy-making in the USSR, 1953-1961—Two Views,* Melbourne, Lansdowne Press, 1962, pp. 10 and 30.

[3] See Yu. M. Kozlov, *Kollegialnost i yedinonachalie v Sovetskom upravlenii,* Moscow, Gosyurizdat, 1956, p. 30. One should also note the institutional effects of Malenkov's replacement as Premier by Bulganin in February 1955. The Presidium of the Council of Ministers was defined as consisting of the Premier and the First Deputy Premiers. Of the four leaders entitled to membership under this formula, one dropped out (Malenkov, who was reduced to *Deputy* Premier only) while another (Bulganin) was in a position of considerable dependence upon Khrushchev and in disagreement with the other two (Molotov and Kaganovich).

[4] Nor can we assume that Khrushchev's foray into Suslov's own field of ideology, namely his "secret speech" to the 20th Congress and his subsequent pressing of "de-Stalinization," necessarily brought the two secretaries into opposition; in fact, as Mr. Lowenthal argues in the article cited above, the indications are to the contrary.

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afforded. Khrushchev threw his weight behind programs which, while promising to relieve the log-jam which Stalin's methods had produced (and therefore commanding considerable support both inside and outside the Presidium), at the same time frequently yielded him considerable organizational advantages. One such program was administrative decentralization, especially in the control of industry. Between 1953 and 1956, 15,000 enterprises were transferred from Union to Republic jurisdiction.[5] Decentralization could certainly be justified on grounds of efficiency, but since important supervisory and problem-solving powers were thereby vested in local party bureaus and secretariats, it also tended to enhance the role of the party apparatus as against the government apparatus.

A more specific example of Khrushchev's efforts to widen the jurisdiction of his apparatus was the abolition of the *raion* Agriculture Departments in September 1953 and the transfer to groups of party officials stationed in the Machine Tractor Stations of primary responsibility for day-to-day control of the *kolkhozy.* While defensible on administrative and ideological grounds, this move also significantly narrowed the role of government agencies in the direction of agriculture and increased the role of the party machine.[6]

Such organizational maneuvers also aided Khrushchev's manipulation of personnel. For example, his reorganization of the base of the agricultural administration enabled him to control the performance of regional leaders, which was of the utmost value to him when it came to rewarding his friends and punishing his enemies. Within weeks of this reorganization Khruschchev had employed the pretext of agricultural incompetence to effect the removal of a dozen or more *obkom* (District Committee) secretaries and *oblispolkom* (District Executive Committee) chairmen, several of their replacements being Khrushchev protégés of many years' standing.

But if organizational changes facilitated personnel moves, the latter in turn carried within them organizational implications, particularly insofar as they affected the membership of the Central Committee. Khrushchev appears to have been the only member of the oligarchy with a clear appreciation of the potential importance of the Central Committee as a possible court of appeal from a divided Presidium, and he was certainly the only one to take steps to exploit the situation. The Central Committee, which virtually atrophied in Stalin's last years, had been formally revived by his heirs to help legitimate their power. Khrushchev worked to invest the form with substance. He began to convene the Central Committee to discuss and approve major innovations in his areas of jurisdiction, and Bulganin was induced to do the same after his appointment to the premiership. By July 1955 the Central Committee was being asked to resolve an issue (the reconciliation with Yugoslavia) on which differences were known to exist within the Presidium. In December 1956 Khrushchev's rivals themselves carried the process further by convening the Central Committee to approve changes in economic planning and in the structure of the State Economic Commission. (These decisions, which converted the State Economic Commission into something like an economic inner cabinet and promised to enhance the power and effectiveness of the central government, were certainly unwelcome to Khrushchev; but, perhaps needing time to recover his élan and to assess the situation produced by the Hungarian revolt and other blows to his de-Stalinization policies, he decided to play a passive role at this Plenum). Thus, step by step, there was built up the feeling that the Presidium was to some degree *genuinely,* and not just formally, accountable to the Central Committee.

MEANWHILE THE PERSONNEL changes sponsored by Khrushchev were substantially transforming the actual and potential membership of the Central Committee. While there is little evidence that Khrushchev exercised much influence over government appointments, except in the fields of agriculture and internal security, his role was dominant in effecting changes among regional party and government officials, who between them made up over half the Central Committee membership. The 133 full members of the Central Committee approved by the 20th Congress in February 1956 included 56 officials whose careers had been fostered by Khrushchev, and some 20 others whose relationship to Khrushchev was probably similar. Although this did not ensure Khrushchev an automatic majority (witness his protégé Shepilov, who changed sides in the June 1957 crisis), it gave him a striking advantage over the other Presidium leaders, none of whom appears to have effected the election of more than a handful of supporters. Thus by both injecting an "appeal-court" element into the role of the Central Committee and by steadily increasing the weight of his supporters within

[5] *Pravda,* January 31, 1957.

[6] In this period the MTS appear to have been cast for the key role in the "raising of *kolkhoz* property to the level of state property." It was evidently anticipated that the "MTS zone" would form the basis of a "higher" type of productive unit by gradually absorbing the organizational functions of the *kolkhozy* and reducing the latter to something like departments of the "zone." See *Pravda,* December 1. 1961.

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it, Khrushchev was preparing for the day when the Central Committee might play a decisive part in his drive to dominate the Soviet leadership. In February 1957 probably, and in June 1957 certainly, it *did* play such a part.[7]

The question has often been raised: Why, with the example of Stalin's use of the party secretaryship in the 1920's before them, did Khrushchev's fellow-oligarchs let him get away with it? The answer is that they did their best to prevent it. They jealously guarded the sovereignty of the Presidium. They chose a relatively junior member to head the Secretariat (Khrushchev was ranked fifth in March 1953), and saw to it that members of the Secretariat did not grow to a majority, or even a substantial minority, within the Presidium. But most of all they appear to have counted on the stability of Presidium membership. So long as the supremacy of the Presidium was unchallenged and Khrushchev (or any other "oligarch") was prevented from removing his rivals piecemeal and replacing them by his protégés —as Stalin had done between 1926 and 1930—there seemed no great danger in his entrenching himself in the area under his jurisdiction. The fact that this yielded Khrushchev ever-growing support in the full Central Committee probably caused little concern in 1953-1954, or even at the 20th Congress, for who would have fancied the Central Committee voting down a Presidium majority? By keeping changes in the Presidium to a minimum—in almost four years there were no removals of full members and only two additions—and by restricting Khrushchev's Presidium protégés to one (Kirichenko), the possibility of his ever dominating this supreme body seemed to be excluded.

Of course they calculated without Khrushchev's extraordinary political talents. He proved to be not *just* a clever and patient manipulator (Malenkov, Kaganovich and others were that, too); in boldness, in energy, in ingenuity, in political intuition and timing, he turned out to be infinitely superior to the other "collective leaders." But in 1953 were they, any more than the foreign student, in a position to appreciate the extent of these talents, or to identify them as precisely those talents that would prove crucial in the forthcoming struggle? Not the least of Khrushchev's political achievements during the post-Stalin interregnum was the balance he maintained between his organizational strength in the country at large and his position in the shifting policy alignments within the Presidium itself. As the weight of the men and organizations at Khrushchev's disposal grew, the size and cohesion required by any coalition to curb him grew in proportion. Khrushchev seems to have exercised the greatest tact in that he pursued, in the Presidium, policy lines which consistently kept the strength of hostile political alignments at a level where these could be contained by his organizational power.[8]

Strategy of Victory

This balance between political alignment and organizational strength was upset only after February 1957, when Khrushchev's moves to steamroller through the decentralization of industrial administration began to unfold. At the February Plenum, Khrushchev secured passage of a resolution which in effect reversed the decisions of the December Plenum on the State Economic Commission and authorized the Presidium to prepare proposals for a regionalization of the economic administration. In view of subsequent events, it is questionable whether this measure commanded majority support within the Presidium, and this Plenum may therefore have been the first occasion on which Khrushchev em-

[7] This question is examined more fully in my article "Khrushchev and the Central Committee," *Australian Outlook*, September 1959. It can be plausibly speculated that Khrushchev's victory in the June 1957 showdown was really settled *before* the Central Committee Plenum: that it depended on the support he could marshal in the police and the army, while the majority he received at the Plenum merely reflected his superiority of force. It is certainly true that Khrushchev had important friends and protégés in the KGB, the Moscow Garrison, and the Moscow Military District, and that he evidently enjoyed the qualified support of Defense Minister Zhukov. Nevertheless, while there is insufficient evidence for a definitive answer to this question, what there is suggests strongly that the value to Khrushchev of his military and police connections was mainly a *negative* one, namely that his opponents were prevented by the risk of armed clashes from implementing their majority decisions *directly*, before obtaining Central Committee approval; and that therefore the issue remained open until it was settled at the Central Committee Plenum.

[8] Thus, in pushing for the removal of Malenkov from the premiership in December 1954—February 1955, Khrushchev maneuvered his rival into fighting on an issue—producers' *versus* consumer goods—on which he (Khrushchev) was assured of broad support within the Presidium from the more conservative leaders and those most involved in the industrial and military sectors (probably Molotov, Kaganovich, Pervukhin, Bulganin and Voroshilov). A year later, when his organizational strength had grown considerably, he was able to take a radical line on a controversial issue (de-Stalinization) on which he could expect far narrower support within the Presidium. In November-December 1956, Khrushchev was suddenly faced with the danger of a coalition against him which he might have found difficult to defeat; accordingly he fought for time, being careful to avoid provocation and acquiescing in changes at the December Plenum to which, as he showed six weeks later, he was radically opposed, and intervening in the Plenum discussions only on the marginal issue of housing.

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ployed the Central Committee to force changes in Presidium policies. Be this as it may, the proposals themselves, when officially published some weeks later in the name of the Presidium, were universally referred to as "Comrade Khrushchev's theses," and the remaining members of the Presidium, with the exception of Khrushchev's protégé Kirichenko, demonstratively dissociated themselves from the proposals by maintaining a "conspiracy of silence" in the subsequent nationwide discussion. Their misgivings are not surprising, since Khrushchev's proposals threatened in effect to dismantle the central government apparatus, and thus to deprive most of his Presidium colleagues of their remaining organizational base. Khrushchev now marshalled all the propaganda and organizational resources of the party machine to convert the "public discussion" into virtually unanimous endorsement of his basic proposals, thus presenting his rivals with the alternative of acquiescing or publicly throwing down the gauntlet. They chose the former course and maintained silence up to and throughout the May Supreme Soviet session which enacted the reform. The abortive attempt to unseat Khrushchev came only six weeks later, and there is little doubt that the decentralization issue precipitated this move.

There is no need to decide whether or not Khrushchev's actions between February and May 1957 were *intended* to provoke a showdown in the Presidium. What should be noted is that Khrushchev contrived to

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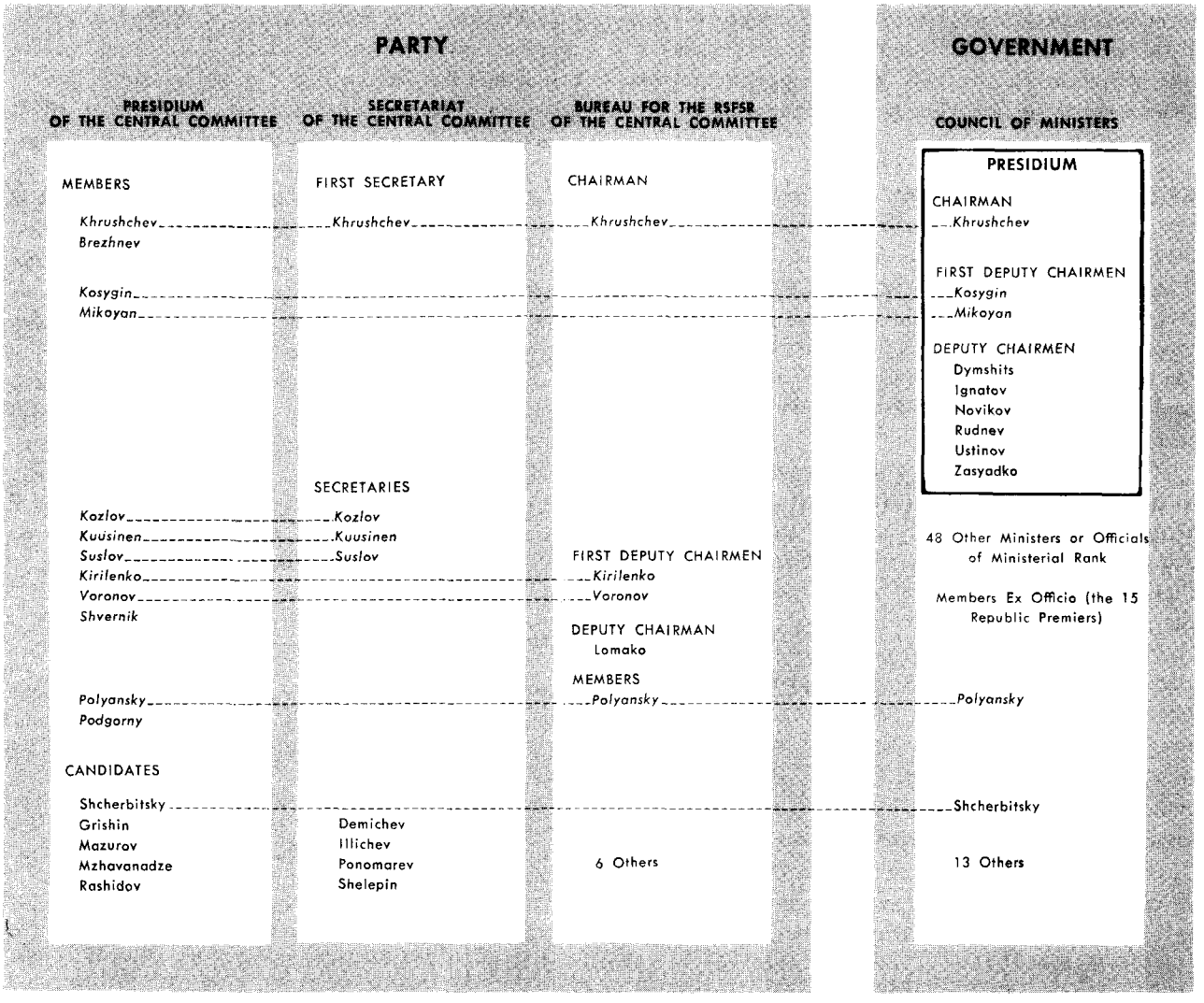

NOTE: Full members of CC Presidium in italics.

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fight on ground that would secure him the maximum tactical advantages whether his Presidium opponents moved against him or not. If they acquiesced in the *status quo* after the industrial decentralization, his organizational strength would be so enhanced thereby that he would be able to deal with them piecemeal; if, however, they "revolted," they would be forced so to identify themselves with government *versus* party interests and with central *versus* local interests, that he could then count on support well beyond the limits of his direct patronage influence—from such central party officials as Suslov, for example, and from the republic and local officials who made up over half the Central Committee membership.[9] And here we must stress again that these calculations would have had little relevance but for Khrushchev's successful efforts to revive the Central Committee as a functioning institution. These tactics were of course vindicated by the June 1957 Plenum, where Khrushchev seems to have enjoyed the *active* support of about two-thirds of those present. (According to Kozlov, this was the proportion who volunteered to speak against the "anti-party group.")

KHRUSHCHEV'S VICTORY in the June 1957 showdown ensured his dominance of the Presidium and of the regime as a whole, a dominance that was both demonstrated and consolidated by his removal of Marshal Zhukov four months later. But the *achievement* of this dominance produced an institutional legacy that was far from ideal, for it left Khrushchev considerably dependent on two bodies: the Central Committee and the Secretariat.

It looked in 1957 as if the June Plenum might prove to be of a historical importance far transcending the victory of one group of leaders over another. The reassertion of Central Committee sovereignty over the Presidium seemed like the first step towards reversing the institutional effects of the *Yezhovshchina*. Khrushchev, no doubt, had encouraged the CC members to take seriously their importance and authority (which may have been a factor in the support he enjoyed at the Plenum), but the fresh powers of that body—even though they still depended for their activation upon initiatives from within the Presidium or Secretariat—eventually grew into a potential threat to the First Secretary's scope of action, or possibly even a personal danger, should his authority in the inner bodies be challenged. Khrushchev showed the greatest caution in approaching this problem, and he tacitly acknowledged the increased role and authority of the CC by convening it no less than eight times in the year and a half between the June Plenum and the 21st Congress—a record since the 1920's.

Since during the interregnum the most important of Khrushchev's supporters tended to be concentrated in the CC Secretariat—the apex of his organizational power—it was inevitable that his victory over the Presidium in June 1957 should bear something of the character of a take-over of the latter by the Secretariat. CC Secretaries numbered two out of eleven full members of the Presidium before the June Plenum, seven out of fifteen after it. No less important, it was inevitable that most of Khrushchev's lieutenants should *retain* Secretariat posts *after* their elevation to the Presidium, since the Council of Ministers had been so crippled by the economic decentralization and the consequences of the June Plenum[10] that the Secretariat was left as the only effective instrument of centralized coordination.[11] The crucial role the Secretariat had come to assume was reflected in a further reorganization in December 1957, which raised the ratio of its members in the Presidium to nine out of fifteen—easily the greatest identity of membership between the two bodies in the history of the regime. The advantages of this situation to Khrushchev are obvious: the dominance of a Khrushchev-controlled Secretariat reduced any actual or potential opposition remaining in the Presidium to impotence. But the more vestigial this opposition became, the more the disadvantages outweighed the advantages. For, lacking any alternative basis of power or channel for this authority, Khrushchev became in a sense a prisoner of the Secretariat. To pose an extreme example, if the Secretariat had ever revolted against his leadership, he would have had no other cards to play short of another appeal to the Central Committee or the employment of force.

Consolidation of Dominance

Between 1958 and 1960 Khrushchev therefore effected radical changes in the structure, functions and personnel of the central organs of rule, which relieved him of

[9] Khrushchev also made timely concessions to save the defense industries from decentralization and thus avoided pushing the military leaders into the opposition camp.

[10] A significant factor here was that for tactical reasons Khrushchev had felt constrained temporarily to leave one of his "anti-party" opponents, Bulganin, as Chairman of the Council of Ministers.

[11] The failure to equip Gosplan to perform the coordinating role assigned it under the decentralization meant that the multifarious problems coming up from the Councils of National Economy (*Sovnarkhozy*) tended to reach the center via party rather than government channels. See Rigby and Churchward, *Policy-making in the USSR*, pp. 13, 25.

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his dependence on the Secretariat and the Central Committee, and provided firm institutional foundations for his personal dominance.

Although the problem of the Central Committee was, on the face of it, the easier to solve, Khrushchev spent over a year consolidating his power in other directions before he felt ready to tackle it. Starting with the Plenum of December 1958, the meetings of the Central Committee underwent a striking change of character. They were convened less frequently; their usual agenda became the review of some broad area of the economy rather than the solution of specific current issues; they were attended by hundreds of non-members employed in the relevant fields of activity; and their proceedings were published verbatim. The increased ballyhoo surrounding the CC Plenums suggested an enlargement of their role; from the point of view of *power,* however, the Central Committee was thus divested of the opportunity to exercise or enlarge upon that embryonic control over the inner organs of rule which it had won in 1957. Increasingly its sessions took on the form of a dialogue between Khrushchev and the others present, with the First Secretary interrupting himself and other speakers to elicit information, pass judgment or give spot directions to all and sundry, including the highest officials. The Central Committee had become Nikita Sergeevich's court.

Khrushchev's obvious tactic vis-à-vis the Secretariat was diversification of his channels of authority. The key move here was of course his assumption from Bulganin of the premiership in March 1958. Shortly afterwards, the Presidium of the Council of Ministers, which seems to have been in abeyance for some four years, was resuscitated.[12] In the summer of 1958, a thorough revamping of the Gosplan apparatus, particularly the machinery of procurement and supply, greatly enhanced the capacity of the central government to coordinate the economy.[13] Later changes, including the creation of republic Councils of National Economy and coordinating bodies in the newly-formed "Large Economic Areas", the further strengthening of Gosplan, and the setting up, or raising to Council-of-Ministers status, of some fourteen central government agencies, added even more weight to the revival of government channels in general and of the Council of Ministers in particular. This was also reflected in the appointment of a number of new Deputy Premiers and the transfer of several leaders from the Secretariat to government jobs.

Another expedient used by Khrushchev to broaden the base of his power structure was his enhancement of the Bureau of the Central Committee for the RSFSR. Originally set up in 1956 to correct the anomalous absence in the RSFSR of a republic party executive, Khrushchev now clearly decided to use the bureau to extend his influence in this largest of the republics. From the beginning its leading members were also members of the Secretariat, and this continued after the removal of the "anti-party group": in 1958-59, of the five full members of the Presidium with seats on the RSFSR Bureau, three had places in the CC Secretariat as well. This overlap was reduced to one (Khrushchev himself) in the reshuffle of leaders announced in May 1960. Although the RSFSR Bureau continues to function through departments of the Central Committee apparatus which are more or less closely integrated with like-named departments serving the other republics, its separate identity vis-à-vis the Secretariat and its importance in the system of central executive bodies has undoubtedly grown since 1960.

The May 1960 reshuffle was the most important step in the institutional consolidation of Khrushchev's power after his assumption of the premiership two years earlier. In reducing the Secretariat from ten members to five and in strengthening both the Council of Ministers and the RSFSR Bureau by the transfer of top personnel, it marked the end of the Secretariat's era of hegemony. The sorting-out of most of the Presidium members into three discreet groups, which took place at the May 1960 Plenum, has subsequently been rounded off by the leadership changes effected after the 22nd Congress.

As of June 1962, of the twelve full members of the CC Presidium, four had seats on the Secretariat (Khrushchev, Kozlov, Suslov and Kuusinen), four on the RSFSR Bureau (Khrushchev, Voronov, Kirilenko and Polyansky), and three on the Presidium of the Council of Ministers (Khrushchev, Mikoyan and Kosygin). A glance at these names will show not only that Khrushchev is unique in being a member of all three bodies (in fact he acts as chairman of all of them) but that no other Presidium member has a place on more than one of them. Although the CC Presidium remains, at least in form and probably in fact, the most important of all these inner bodies, much of the business of government must by now be concen-

[12] See R. C. Tucker in *American Slavic and East European Review,* December 1959, p. 532. The government Presidium has subsequently been mentioned by a number of Soviet textbooks, although without details on its membership. It may be safely assumed, however, that the body consists of the Premier and the First Deputy and Deputy Premiers, and that other members of the Council of Ministers are invited to attend on an *ad hoc* basis.

[13] See P. V. Smirnov and R. B. Tarasyants, *Organizatsiia i planirovanie sbyta promyshlennoi produktsii SSR,* Moscow, Gosplanizdat, 1960, pp. 59-78.

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trated in the three technically less important ones.[14] This being so, the *institutional* strength of Khrushchev's position (which probably exceeds anything that Stalin ever achieved) is perfectly obvious.

Final Assessment

Since Khrushchev's demonstration of power in 1957, it has always seemed improbable *a priori* that any group within the Soviet leadership would combine to restrict his dominance. But it is in the role he has come to assume in the regime's supreme executive organs that the most incontrovertible *evidence* of his dominance is to be found. We have seen how acutely aware Stalin's heirs were of the power implications of institutional arrangements, and what meticulous care they took to guard against the domination of any individual or clique. If there *is* some powerful group of leaders capable of obstructing a First Secretary-Prime Minister's policies and drive for power, how then has Khrushchev managed to achieve his present position of overwhelming organizational superiority? And since this superiority has become a reality, in what organizational terms can the activities of such a group be imagined?

Current speculation concerning Khrushchev's position centers mostly on other issues, and numerous facts have plausibly been adduced as evidence of the continued influence of a constant or shifting "stop-Khrushchev group." In the view of the present writer, the institutional argument that has been outlined here casts serious doubt on such interpretations. What is more, the facts usually advanced in support of the "stop-Khrushchev group" thesis are in most cases susceptible of different and equally plausible explanations. Take, for example, the fact that policies initiated or foreshadowed by Khrushchev or by clearly-identified protégés are occasionally reversed or fail to eventuate. This can just as well mean that Khrushchev is strong enough to change his mind and that his lieutenants have the scope and motivation to differ among themselves. Again, there is the fact that appeals and hints about further disciplinary measures against Khrushchev's defeated opponents have found no expression in action; but one can just as plausibly see in this a demagogic display of forbearance and magnanimity combined with a prophylactic baring of fangs. And what of the removal of some Khrushchev protégés from the Presidium? One may reasonably answer that Khrushchev is no longer so dependent upon those who supported him against the "anti-party group" that he is prevented from replacing older lieutenants by newer ones.

Much discussion of Khrushchev's position is bedeviled by a common assumption of certain irresistible (though undefined) forces which compel him to drive for the degree and nature of power exercised by Stalin. The extent of Khrushchev's dominance is then measured by comparison with Stalin in terms of the personality cult, the demonstrated ability to use the instruments of terror against opponents, and so on. We might as well assess Stalin's power by his success in using the techniques of dominance employed by Lenin. Such judgments ignore differences in mentality and motivation, the necessity of pursuing different roads to power, and changes in the socio-political context in which power is exercised.

Khrushchev is not simply the most prominent figure in a collective leadership and the figurehead and spokesman of the regime. He is *the* leader of the Soviet Union, whose dominance of his country is certainly *no less* than General Franco's or Prime Minister Salazar's of theirs. This is not to say that he decides everything alone or that he can do *what* he likes *when* he likes. But in the last analysis *his* wishes and *his* decisions are those that really matter.

[14] The remaining full members of the Presidium are Brezhnev (Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet), Podgorny (First Secretary of the Ukrainian Central Committee) and Shvernik (Chairman of the Party Control Commission). Of the five candidate-members, four are leaders from the national republics and one (Grishin) is the Chairman of the Central Trade Unions Council; none enjoys membership in any of the three inner executive bodies.

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The Peasant vs. the Consumer: A Crisis in Prices

By Seweryn Bialer

THE DIVIDING LINE between success and failure in Soviet agriculture has always been very thin. During the first half of 1962 Soviet leaders acknowledged by implication that the pendulum had swung decisively toward failure. This long overdue acknowledgement expressed itself mainly in actions aimed at a radical cure of agricultural ills. From a long-range viewpoint, probably the most important of these actions were two decisions adopted at the March 1962 Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee, one aimed at a complete reorganization of the agricultural administration, and the other at the abandonment of the *"travopolye"* (grass-rotation) crop system. Much more dramatic in its impact, however, was a more recent decision that has forced the Soviet population to face up to the agricultural problems of the country in an immediate, salient, and—for wage and salary earners—painful way.

This decision, announced on June 1, 1962, by decree of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, raised the government retail prices paid by consumers an average of 30 percent for meat and meat products and 25 percent for butter. At the same time, it raised the procurement prices paid by the government to the *kolkhozy* (collective farms) an average of 35 percent for meat, 10 percent for butter and 5 percent for cream.[1]

[1] The decree, accompanied by a "Proclamation to the Soviet People," was published in *Pravda*, June 1, 1962. Simultaneously but of relatively minor impact, the decree lowered the retail price on sugar by 5 percent and on viscose synthetic materials by 20 percent.

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The decree of June 1 deserves close scrutiny and evaluation as a decision of both economic and political significance. In particular, four aspects of the bill warrant detailed attention.

Retail Price Policy

1) Firstly, the increase in the official price of such consumer products as meat and butter was in itself a very unusual step, reversing the basic trend of the last 15 years and recalling the predominant price drift of the Stalin era. The first 20 of Stalin's 25 years of rule (*i.e.*, from the start of his industrialization drive onward) was marked by an almost continuous increase in consumer goods prices: an inflationary spiral in the 1930's was followed by wartime inflation and then by an extraordinary rise in the official prices of consumer goods during the first postwar years. During this period, the food-price index in the sphere of official trade rose from a base of 100 in 1928 to 1,014 in 1937 and 3,056 in 1948.[2]

The spring of 1948 saw the first move toward a deflation of official consumer-goods prices, including food, and was followed up by yearly announcements of price reductions until Stalin's death. At the time he died, the food-price index in official trade (1947 = 100) stood at 43.[3] For two years more the price decline continued. Considering the deplorable conditions of Soviet

[2] Estimate based on official Moscow prices: see Naum Jasny, *The Soviet Economy during the Plan Era*, Stanford, Cal., Stanford University Press, 1951, p. 112.

[3] *Narodnoe khoziaistvo SSSR v 1956 godu* (The National Economy of the USSR in 1956), Moscow, 1957, p. 233. Comparison of prices prevailing in the fourth quarter of 1947 and after the price reduction of April 1, 1952.

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agriculture in 1953, it is clear that the large slashes in foodstuff prices of that year were politically motivated.

After 1954, the policy of large annual price cuts was abandoned. During the last six years preceding the recent decree a few upward or downward fluctuations took place, but in general the prices of basic food commodities (excluding liquor) remained fairly stable.[4] During this period Soviet efforts to improve the popular lot were concentrated in the area of wages and social welfare rather than price policies, allowing a more selective distribution of benefits than across-the-board price reductions. At the same time the continued shortage of supplies—or more specifically, the gap between effective demand and the regime's ability to satisfy it through government procurements—resulted in wide discrepancy between the official and free market prices, along with such problems as black-market "speculation" and the ubiquitous phenomenon of queues in front of the shops. Nevertheless the government generally held the line on basic foodstuff prices. In these years Khrushchev seemed to be subscribing—at least in practice—to a theoretical premise" conceived by Stalin, described caustically in the following recent remark of a Soviet economist:

. . . it followed from Stalin's formulation that under socialism the demand for industrial and agricultural products should outdistance the supply; that is, . . . production should remain behind demand, [a relationship] allegedly constituting a superior feature of the socialist system of production.[5]

The decree of June 1, 1962, thus represents the first dramatic increase in the official prices of basic foodstuffs under Khrushchev's rule, and in fact since the pivotal point of 1948. The retail prices of meat and butter in the official trade system have returned to the level which prevailed in the last years of Stalin's rule.

Procurement Price Policy

2) The June 1st decision is also notable in that it lifted the lid on a three-year halt in the movement of procurement prices paid by the government to the *kolkhozy* for livestock products, resuming the upward trend of such prices in the earlier post-Stalin years. From September 1953 through 1958, the procurement rates paid to the *kolkhozy* rose steeply—in fact, this increase was one of the main features of Khrushchev's plan to stimulate greater interest among collective farmers in agricultural development (see Table I). During 1959, however—most notably at a December Plenum of the Central Committee—voices were raised calling for a partial reversal of this policy, culminating in Khrushchev's announced intention to cut the procurement prices paid the *kolkhozy* to the level of those paid the *sovkhozy* (state farms).[6] The Premier's announcement apparently was never implemented—probably because the performance of Soviet agriculture remained far below Soviet expectations (as we shall see). Available evidence suggests, however, that some price cuts were effected and that in general the procurement prices for livestock products were at least held at a stable level after 1959.

TABLE I

Procurement Prices Index

	1950	1956	1958
Meat (live weight)	100	520	943
Milk and milk products	100	323	383

SOURCE: *Comparisons of the U.S. and Soviet Economics,* Joint Economic Committe, U.S. Congress, Washington, D.C., 1959, Part I, p. 271. The 1950 and 1956 figures represent the weighted average of compulsory-delivery and above-quota prices.

Among such evidence, a comparison of procurement prices announced in July 1958 with those reported to be in effect just before the new price rise (cited in a "Proclamation to the Soviet People" that accompanied the June decree) indicates that the procurement price of beef declined by 2.8 rubles per centner of live weight (or over 4 percent) in this period, while the price of poultry went up by less than one percent.[7]

Extrapolations from other official Soviet statistics (presented in Table II on this page) offer a similar picture of more or less stable procurement prices for 1959-60. As the table shows, from 1956 through 1958 the amount paid to non-*sovkhoz* producers for livestock products increased much more sharply each year

[4] On the basis 1954=100, the food price index including liquor was 104 in 1960. In this period liquor prices rose over 20 percent. Prices of meat and poultry rose considerably in 1956 but declined in the next two years and thereafter remained stable. The price of butter showed no change after 1954. See *Narodnoe khoziaistvo . . . v 1956,* p. 232, and *Narodnoe khoziaistvo SSSR v 1960 godu,* 1961, p. 716.

[5] A. Bolgov, in *Voprosy ekonomiki* (Moscow), No. 5, 1962, p. 9.

[6] For details of these developments, see the author's article, ". . . But Some Are More Equal Than Others," *Problems of Communism,* No. 2 (March-April), 1960.

[7] Based on figures in *Pravda,* July 1, 1958, and June 1, 1962.

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than did the volume of deliveries of each of the four major products themselves [8]—reflecting the rise in the procurement prices paid by the government (especially in 1958). In 1959 and 1960, on the other hand, the change in the volume of deliveries roughly corresponded to the change in the value paid for them, suggesting that no important upward or downward procurement price adjustments took place.[9]

The June 1st decree sharply departs from this pattern, reverting to the upward movement of prices that was interrupted in 1959. The new procurement prices to be paid to the *kolkhozy* are higher, as compared to the 1959-62 period, by the following percentages: fowl, 52.3 percent; beef, 41.9; pork, 28.7; mutton, 15; butter, 10; cream, 5.[10]

Public Opinion Factors

3) A third aspect of the June 1st decision deserving attention is the manner in which it was made public.

There is little precedent in Soviet experience for an open announcement of a price increase on basic consumer goods, especially an announcement that came close to confessing that the living standard of the Soviet population was about to be lowered (albeit "temporarily"). The price increases of Stalin's day either were put into effect without public notice or, if announced, were euphemistically called "certain price adjustments." A favorite Stalinist device was to conceal increases in food prices behind the practice of gradating various commodities sold to the population in retail trade (for example, low quality butter would be regraded and repriced in a higher bracket; simultaneously, "low" grades of butter would virtually disappear from the government stores.)

Expectably, official statements as well as numerous editorials and articles on the June 1st decree contained the usual content of propaganda, distortion, and outright falsehood—especially in their efforts to justify the government's action in terms of the alleged growing aggressiveness of "American imperialism" (see, for example, the distorted treatment of US President Kennedy's remarks in his much-publicized interview with the American columnist Joseph Alsop). Similarly, in dealing with the current domestic economic situation and the factors which led up to it, official pronouncements excelled in offering half and quarter truths: *e.g.*, the facts of how the production, procurement and sale of agricultural products have fared during the Seven-Year Plan were concealed behind irrelevant comparisons of the present with the year 1953, or with a new favorite of Khrushchev's—the yearly average of 1956-60.

Yet these distortions notwithstanding, the official pronouncements on the June 1st action were more straightforward and rational in presenting the economic argumentation of the new policy than any produced in comparable circumstances in the past. Even more notable,

[8] The one exception concerns egg deliveries in 1957; however, it may be pointed out that in the previous year, egg deliveries accounted for only a little more than one percent of the total money receipts for the four commodities listed in the table (see *Comparisons of the US and Soviet Economies*, Joint Economic Committee, US Congress, Washington, D.C., 1959, Part I, p. 284). According to this author's estimate, in 1960 egg deliveries still accounted for less than four percent of the total receipts for the four commodities.

[9] The only alternate explanation would have to assume that a major shift had taken place in the qualitative make-up of deliveries of the products listed—*e.g.*, a shift to deliveries of more expensive meats—and there is no evidence that this was the case.

According to another official Soviet source (*Selskoe khoziaistvo* SSSR, Moscow, Gostatizdat, 1960, p. 117), the average procurement prices for livestock products increased in the year 1959 by about three percent. (This figure is derived from an index of average procurement prices paid to non-*sovkhoz* producers for all livestock products, indicating increases throughout the post-Stalin era as follows: 1952=100, 1953=214, 1954=307, 1955=319, 1956=371, 1957=420, 1958=546, 1959=561). While the implied three percent rise in 1959 differs slightly from other calculations, it does not contradict the general picture of a leveling off of procurement prices after 1958.

[10] See *Pravda*, June 1, 1962, and *Kommunist* (Moscow), No. 9, June 1962, p. 43.

TABLE II

Shifts in volume and cost of government procurement of livestock products (excluding *sovkhozy*)

(% of increase [+] or decrease [−] over previous year)

	1956	1957	1958	1959	1960
Meat	+14	+ 3	+12	+33	−2
Milk and milk products	+32	+10	+ 6	+10	−5
Eggs	+10	+27	+ 2	+24	+7
Wool	+ 8	0	+11	+12	−2
Procurement payments for livestock products	+34	+23	+44	+25	−2

SOURCES: Computed from *Narodnoe khoziaistzo SSSR v 1959 godu*, Moscow, 1960, p. 323, 325, 444; and *Narodnoe khoziaistvo SSSR v 1960 g.*, 1961, pp. 381, 383, 514.

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the tenor of the pronouncements was apologetic, defensive. Considered in large, they can be said to express the change in the style of Soviet leadership—a change which to some extent is of the leaders' own choosing, but which basically reflects the altered socio-political atmosphere in the post-Stalin era and illuminates the increasing onus on the leadership to prepare and convince public opinion in support of its actions.

That the Soviet top command expected public discontent over the decree and felt pressed to counteract it was evidenced in several ways: the issuance of an explanatory "Proclamation to the Soviet People" in company with the decree (published June 1st on the front pages of all Soviet newspapers); the precipitate haste of Khrushchev's visit in May to Rumania; and the unprecedented number of public speeches that Khrushchev made in the month of June.

IT IS LITTLE WONDER that discontent was anticipated, considering the meaning of the price raise to the average Soviet wage earner in terms of his living standard. Since the Soviet government, in announcing price reductions in the past, has never failed to advertise estimates of the savings that would result to the population, it is only appropriate to estimate the losses that Soviet urban consumers will suffer in consequence of the present price increase. On the basis of official Soviet data, it can be estimated that the new prices of meat and butter will boost the general price index for food (excluding alcoholic beverages) by approximately 5 percent, and will impose a money loss on urban consumers of between 1.5 and 1.7 billion new rubles annually.[11]

Some idea of the relative magnitude of this loss can be obtained by comparing it with the effect of price reductions in the past. Between 1955 and 1960 three price reductions took place, (in 1956, 1957 and 1959): together these lowered the prices of children's clothing and other children's items, some fabrics, aluminum kitchenware, radios and radio equipment, watches, bicycles, cameras, nylons, wines, toys, some medicines, canned fish, fruits and vegetables, food concentrates, fat, pork, and smoked goods. Gains to consumers resulting from all these reductions were said to total about 1.1 billion rubles[12]—that is, less than the present loss.

Moreover, it should be noted that the price reductions of past years largely concerned products of marginal utility to the majority of Soviet consumers, especially those in the lower wage brackets. The present price increase concentrates exclusively on the basic food products most desired by the consumer, and the shortage of these products is most strongly felt by the low income groups.

Finally, it should be noted that whereas the price reductions of the past spread savings (although unequally) among all sectors of the population, the present price increase exclusively affects the non-farm populace —thus its impact in terms of money loss is almost double in the urban areas.

The regime's apprehension over adverse public reaction seems to have proven justified, judging by some official statements. For example, just one day after the price announcement Khrushchev, speaking to a youth gathering in Moscow, remarked:

. . . our people have to overcome the present difficulties, to understand the situation, and not just to understand it themselves but to explain it to those who understand less well. . . . I appeal to members of the party and the Komsomol, to the workers, to *kolkhoz* peasants and to the intelligentsia . . . not only to understand this action . . . but to explain to others its unavoidability and its importance, and to conduct a struggle with those anti-social elements who hinder our movement forward. And such elements do exist—there are still self-seekers [*"rvachi"*], loafers and also criminals . . . who should be brought to their senses. . . .[13]

A few weeks later Khrushchev, speaking to an agricultural conference, made the revealing admission that grumbling over the June 1st action—far from being confined to "anti-social elements"—was indeed being heard within the inner sanctum of the party:

We know that even certain Communists talk sometimes in this manner: "So at the 22nd Party Congress we adopted the program of building communism—and afterwards the prices for meat went up. Where are we moving—forward or backward?" Only those who look backward think in this way; those who look forward see very well that we are moving forward.[14]

Though discontent may have been even more extensive than was expected, Khrushchev could not have been too surprised. At least two and a half years ago, in a speech exhorting party leaders to increase agricultural output, he warned against just such a reaction in the populace:

We should recognize that the further we move ahead . . .

[11] Estimated on the basis of the 1960 volume of sales in the official trade system (see *Narodnoe khoziaistvo . . . v 1960*, p. 689) Savings which will result from the lowering of the price of sugar in the June 1st decree are included in the computation.

[12] See *Pravda*, January 2, 1958, and July 1, 1959.

[13] *Ibid.*, June 3, 1962.

[14] *Ibid.*, June 30, 1962.

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the more assertive and uncompromising will be the working people's attitude toward hardships. Why? Because people want to see the successes in economic development in the stores and in their shopping bags.[15]

Effects on the Farm Population

4) Consideration finally must be given to certain unusual and significant socio-economic aspects of the June 1st decision.

It has just been pointed out that the new retail-price increase on meat and butter amounts in effect to a special tax levied exclusively on wage earners—for obviously, the Soviet peasants do not buy livestock products in the government stores. At the same time, the June 1st decree benefits the farm population directly and immediately, and not just through the increase of government procurement prices paid to the *kolkhozy*; the retail-price increase itself operates to improve the peasant's income through its effect on the extra-governmental *kolkhoz* market.

The urban population is supplied with livestock products not only through the government trade structure but in part through the *kolkhoz* market, where peasants sell produce raised on their private plots or received as payment-in-kind for their *trudodni* (labor days) in the collective fields. Sometimes collectively-owned produce—that is, part of the surplus (if any) that remains to collectives after deliveries to the state—is also sold in this market.

In recent years, the absolute volume of livestock commodities sold in the *kolkhoz* market has declined considerably; in the period 1957-60, for example, the turnover of meat decreased by 24 percent, and of milk and milk products by 23 percent.[16] At the same time, the relative weight of *kolkhoz* market trade in the total turnover of foodstuffs (calculated here on the basis of products, including livestock commodities, sold both in the official and *kolkhoz* markets) fell from 18.2 percent in 1957 to 13.8 percent in 1960.[17] Yet despite these declines, the revenues from the *kolkhoz* market remain a basic component of the peasants' income.[18]

In the past, the prices paid by urban consumers in the *kolkhoz* market have consistently and substantially exceeded government retail prices for the same products (the difference in price levels, expressed in percentages, is shown in Table III). Patronage of the *kolkhoz* market, despite its higher prices, reflects the chronic inability of the official trade system to satisfy the effective demand of the population, due both to shortages in production and inefficiencies in distribution by the cumbersome trade organizations.

The retail price increase of June 1962 will probably diminish the big margin between the official and the *kolkhoz* market prices by artificially curtailing the effective demand for livestock products; that is, assuming that the 1962 production of livestock commodities is not catastrophically low (rewidening the gap between supply and effective demand), the difference between government and *kolkhoz* market prices, as expressed in percentages, will decrease. In terms of absolute figures, however, it can be expected that the *kolkhoz* market prices for meat and butter will rise by some amount, if not by the whole amount, of the government price increase. For it is doubtful whether the official increase, large as it is, can curb the heavy demand for such basic products as meat and butter so effectively that the government channels can fully cover the trade.[19] There is also no reason to expect radical changes in the distribution performance of Soviet trade organizations.

From the point of view of agricultural producers—including both individual peasants and collective farm

[15] Stenographic Report of the Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee, December 22-25, 1959 (in Russian), Moscow, 1960, p. 394.

TABLE III

Excess of kolkhoz market prices over official trade prices (in %)

	1957	1958	1959	1960
All commodities	33	38	30	35
Beef	34	43	43	45
Mutton	46	51	45	60
Butter	39	21	20	21

SOURCES: Computed from *Narodnoe khoziaistvo SSSR v 1959 godu*, Moscow, 1960, pp. 680-81; and *Narodnoe khoziaistvo SSSR v 1960 g.*, 1961, pp. 718-19.

[16] Computed from *Narodnoe khoziaistvo SSSR v 1959 godu*, 1960, p. 709, and *Narodnoe khoziaistvo . . . v 1960*, p. 737.

[17] *Narodnoe khoziaistvo . . . v 1959*, p. 636, and *Narodnoe khoziaistvo . . . v 1960*, p. 680.

[18] While the peasants' income from their private plots declined after 1958, there was no compensating increase for their work on the collective lands. For an excellent review on this subject, see A. Kahan, "Recent Trends in Soviet Farm Incomes," *Problems of Communism*, No. 6, (November-December), 1961.

[19] If, of course, there were ever a radical increase in livestock production and especially in state procurements, the price gap between the *kolkhoz* and official markets could conceivably disappear.

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units—the incentive to sell on the free market has naturally been strong, due to the considerable difference between procurement prices paid by the government and the retail prices paid by the population, especially in the open market. While the June 1st decree raised procurement prices, it raised official retail prices even more (in terms of absolute figures). Given the additional increment the peasants and collectives can expect on the open market, the incentive to sell outside government procurement channels remains as strong if not stronger than ever. To cite some examples, the decree has increased the difference between the procurement price and the official retail price of beef from 51.7 to 60 rubles per centner of live weight, and of pork from 73.3 to 80 rubles.[20]

The rise in government procurement prices will in itself add considerably to the income of *kolkhoz* enterprises. Roughly estimated, the collectives' total cash income from this source should increase by approximately 8 to 12 percent.[21] This increase does not, of course, imply an equivalent rise in the income of the *kolkhozniki*. *Kolkhoz* cash revenues are used to pay taxes and insurance, to cover administration and production expenses, and to increase capital and cultural funds: only after these expenditures have been made is the remainder divided among collective members. For the past few years there have been no systematic official statistics to indicate the structure of money expenditures within the *kolkhozy*. For the year 1958, however, one source has estimated that about 38 percent of the total money income of the *kolkhozy* was distributed to members, while about 25 percent went for production expenses, 22 percent for additions to the capital fund (*nedelimyi fond*), and the rest for other *kolkhoz* obligations.[22] There are indications that during and after 1958—the year the Machine Tractor Stations were abolished—the capital funds of the *kolkhozy* began to absorb an increasing share of the collectives' total money income. As Table IV shows, while the collectives' income rose sharply in 1958 (a record year marked both by an increase in procurement prices and by bigger deliveries of farm produce to the government), over one-third of this increment was alloted to augment the capital funds. Of a further rise in total income in 1959 (a good year for livestock production), almost two-thirds went to increase the capital funds. In 1960, the income of the *kolkhozy* declined and so did the capital fund contribution, but by a lesser amount—in other words, its proportion of the total income increased at the sacrifice of other expenditures.[23]

TABLE IV

Relation of capital fund expenditures to *kolkhoz* total money income

CODE: A=Increase (or decrease) over previous year in total money income of the *kolkhozy*.
B=Increase (or decrease) over previous year in capital fund additions.
C=Percent of increase in *kolkhoz* income absorbed by capital fund additions.

	A	B	C
	(in billions of new rubles)		(in %)
1953	+0.68	+0.13	19
1955	+2.6	+0.45	17
1956	+1.9	+0.35	18
1957	+0.06	+0.01	17
1958	+3.68	+1.36	37
1959	+0.48	+0.29	60
1960	−0.37	−0.09	—

SOURCES: Computed from *Narodnoe khoziaistvo SSSR v 1959 godu*, Moscow, 1960, p. 423; and *Narodnoe khoziaistvo SSSR v 1960 g.*, 1961, p. 492.

The *kolkhoz* members will undoubtedly press for higher "workday" payments as a result of the new increase in procurement prices. However, counter-pressure from party and government agricultural organs has always been sufficient to ensure that only a small part of such increases in *kolkhoz* income gets into the pockets of the *kolkhozniki*. Today the hand of the authorities has been further strengthened by the program enacted in March 1962 to reorganize the administration of agriculture, imposing such stringent controls on the *kolkhozy* as to destroy any illusion—even on paper—of their independence from supervision.

SUCH LIMITS NOTWITHSTANDING, the combined effect of higher procurement and higher free market prices can be expected to improve the overall

[20] Calculated from figures in *Pravda*, June 1, 1962, and *Kommunist*, No. 9, June 1962, p. 43.

[21] This estimate is calculated by applying the increased price rate to 1960 figures on *kolkhoz* income from state procurements of livestock products, and measuring the result against income from total state procurements for that year.

[22] *Comparisons of the US and Soviet Economies*, p. 274.

[23] The official explanation for the decline of *kolkhoz* cash income in 1960 as compared to 1959 is the fact that many *kolkhozy* were transformed into *sovkhozy* during 1960, and their income was thus excluded from 1960 totals (see *Narodnoe khoziaistvo . . . v 1960*, footnote on bottom p. 496). However, this fact is irrelevant in demonstrating the proportionate share allocated to capital funds out of *kolkhoz* income.

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finances of the *kolkhozy* and, to a lesser extent, the incomes of their members. A final point must be made concerning the ideological implications of this effort to bolster the agricultural economy, for in contrast to earlier programs of the Khrushchev decade, the current course involves a wholly unorthodox departure from the premises of Soviet doctrine. During the period 1953 to 1958 improvements in the situation of agricultural enterprises and of the peasant population were attributable not only to the redirection of budgetary expenditures in favor of the neglected agricultural sector but also to the growth of farm production; moreover, throughout this period the real wages and salaries of the non-agricultural population were on the increase, although at a lower rate than peasant income. By contrast, the present increase in agricultural revenues derives mainly from the income of the non-farm population: as we have seen, the effect of the June 1st decree is to transfer funds directly from non-farm wage and salary earners to agricultural enterprises and the peasants—and thus to lower workers' living standards.

It is interesting to recall a famous statement made by Stalin back in 1928, when the shoe was on the other foot. In explaining why price relations that were unfavorable to the peasants were being imposed as part of the process of accumulating funds for the industrialization drive, Stalin proclaimed:

This is an additional tax on the peasants in the interest of uplifting our industry, which serves the whole country, including the peasants. This is something like a "tribute," something like a supertax that we are temporarily compelled to impose in order to maintain and to press further the present tempo of the development of industry.[24]

Reversing Stalin's terms to fit the present, for the first time in Soviet history the workers have been called upon to pay "something like a tribute" in the interest of "uplifting agriculture, which serves the whole country, including the workers." [25] That this policy ill befits Communist ideological assumptions is selfevident. It is curious that Khrushchev himself, only two and a half years ago, publicly warned against the ideological as well as the economic dangers of the very tendency which his June 1st decision seems to promote. Speaking at the Central Committee Plenum in December 1959, he said:

In 1953, when many *kolkhozy* were in difficult circumstances, the Soviet government . . . substantially raised the prices paid for *kolkhoz* production, nothwithstanding the fact that some *kolkhoz* production was already more costly than the production of many *sovkhozy*. . . . We knew that the prices we set for some products and crops were high. But we understood that if we did not raise the prices, the *kolkhozy* would not extricate themselves from their difficult situation. . . . Now, since our *kolkhozy* have recovered, moved forward, the earnings of the *kolkhozniki* have become higher. In some districts they even substantially exceed the earnings of the workers. This is unjust. The workers, as it is known, are the leading force of our society.[26]

Considering the implications of ideological impurity raised by the June 1st decree—not to mention such other negative repercussions as the leaders' loss of face and the psychological slump bound to occur in the non-farm population—one can only surmise that the economic motives and pressures which forced the regime to choose its present course of action must have been overwhelming. Let us turn, then, to an analysis of these motives and pressures.

Official Explanations

The immediate considerations which impelled the June 1st decision are fairly obvious and do not require much elaboration. They have been spelled out in considerable detail in official Soviet pronouncements issued on and since June 1st. In brief, they are as follows:

1). The effective demand of wage and salary earners had outstripped the ability of the trade organizations to supply wanted products, especially meat and butter. Said Khrushchev:

We met with difficulties resulting from the fact that people have more money than there are commodities produced by our industry and agriculture. . . . Agricultural production did not keep pace with the growth of popular demand, did not fulfill the assigned plans, and so . . . the people had at their disposal more money than [represented by] our capacity to satisfy the demand for meat and butter.[27]

[24] J. V. Stalin, *Sochineniia,* Moscow, 1952 edition, Vol II, p. 159.

[25] On the question of precedents, it might be argued that Lenin's New Economic Policy was also an incentive measure aimed in part at distributing more of the national income to the peasants, although the NEP *in toto* had much broader aims. In any event, this may explain why Khrushchev, with characteristic modesty, compared his decision on the June 1st decree with Lenin's on NEP (see *Pravda,* June 3, 1962).

It should be noted further that the "tribute" now demanded of the workers hardly compares with the immense sacrifice demanded of the peasants by Stalin. Even with the adjustments of June 1st, the level of industrial prices as compared to agricultural prices (both retail and procurement) remains highly disadvantageous to the peasants and more characteristic of a backward economy than of an industrial power.

[26] Stenographic Report of the Central Committee Plenum, *supra,* pp. 414-15.

[27] *Pravda,* June 3, 1962.

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Thus the increase in retail prices had as one of its goals the curtailment of effective demand and the re-establishment of a balance between the income of the urban population and the volume of available commodities.

2). The steep increase in the procurement prices paid to the *kolkhozy* for livestock products between 1953 and 1958, plus the high cost of government marketing and distribution (which the authorities have been unable to reduce to any significant degree in recent years), partly or completely cancelled out revenues from the turnover tax on many agricultural products. According to Soviet statements, meat products and butter sold through the official retail outlets even had to be subsidized. Official figures showing the relation between costs (to the government) and retail prices of beef and pork are given in Table V. As noted earlier, the new increase in the retail prices of meat and butter is larger in absolute figures than the increase in procurement prices paid to the *kolkhozy*. The aim is to reduce government subsidies by a substantial amount: according to the author's estimate, the subsidy on beef should decline by one-third, on pork by one-half.[28] The complete elimination of the subsidy on these products—in the absence of a further hike in retail prices—would require a decline in government handling costs by over 20 percent in the case of beef and about 10 percent in the case of pork.

3). Despite the great increase in procurement prices between 1953 and 1958, government payments to the *kolkhozy* for livestock commodities did not come close to covering the collectives' production costs. According to Soviet figures, in 1961 the average costs of meat production in *kolkhozy* throughout the country exceeded the procurement prices paid by the government by 49 percent in the case of beef, 43 percent in the case of pork, and 62 percent in the case of poultry.[29] In other words, the collectives *lost* 28.9 rubles on every centner of beef sold to the government, 35.7 rubles on every centner of pork, and 51.3 rubles on every centner of fowl.[30] The collectives' lack of incentive to increase livestock output in this situation occasioned one of Khrushchev's typically down-to-earth comments:

Pardon my rudeness, but what kind of an idiot would increase the production of meat, when the more meat he produces the greater are the losses suffered by his enterprise (*kolkhoz* or *sovkhoz*). How can we call on agricultural producers to increase meat production, while the man to whom we direct this appeal winks an eye and thinks: what do they understand—they prattle on without knowing what they are talking about.[31]

The new rise in procurement prices for meat and butter is thus based on the hope of stimulating the growth of livestock and dairy output by closing the "scissors" between government payments to the *kolkhozy* and the farms' production costs.[32]

Underlying Causes

The Soviet authorities have cited the above three considerations as compelling reasons for the June 1st decision. Yet this explanation raises an immediate question, for the circumstances described—especially in the second and third points—existed two and three years ago as well as today. State subsidies for livestock production were just as costly then as now—in fact more so, since

[28] Estimate based on figures in *Pravda*, June 1, 1962, and in *Kommunist*, No. 9, June 1962, p. 43.

TABLE V

Government Subsidies on Beef and Pork

	Beef	Pork
	(rubles per centner of live weight)	
1. Procurement price	59.1	82.3
2. Handling costs	79.5	84.9
3. Total costs to the government (1+2)	138.6	167.2
4. Retail Price	110.8	155.6
5. Net Subsidy (4−3)	27.8	11.6

SOURCE: Compiled from figures in *Pravda*, June 1, 1962.

[29] *Ibid.*

[30] *Pravda*, June 1, 1962. These figures represent a large additional subsidy on livestock products over and above the cost to the government; in the case of pork, for example, the real (or total) subsidy was over 47 rubles per centner of live weight, 11.6 rubles of which was financed by the government (see Table V) and the rest—or more than ¾—paid directly by the peasants.

[31] *Pravda*, June 30, 1962.

[32] While Khrushchev has said a great deal about the expected increase in agricultural income, he has paid disproportionately little attention to the problem of increasing production goods for the farms and consumer goods for the farmers. It is possible that the stimulating effect of higher procurement prices could to a large extent be lost due to the inadequacy of such supplies; in fact Communist economists have argued on other occasions against overestimating the price instrument as a stimulus to agricultural production: see, *e.g.*, the comments of the Polish economists Brzoza and Pohorille in *Ekonomista*, (Warsaw), No. 4, 1957, pp. 151, 177.

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the costs of government marketing and distribution have been somewhat (though not significantly) reduced in the interim. The cost-income ratio of livestock production was just as adverse for the *kolkhozy* then as now —and again even more so, in view of a slight decline since in production costs.

Yet three years ago the Soviet leaders showed little worry over the state of Soviet agriculture or over the prospects for its expansion. On the contrary, peasant incentives and prices paid to the *kolkhozy* (now pronounced so "obviously inadequate") were then regarded as unjustly high, and the leadership openly expressed fear that they might result in "undeserved profits" for the farm population. The outlook for the official-market supply of livestock produce was evidently thought to be reassuring enough to justify, partly for ideological and partly for economic reasons, a systematic discouragement of the private production of the *kolkhozniki*. Indeed, the Soviet leaders—with apparently no thought for the chronic ills of agriculture in the past—seemed to be outbidding each other in painting rosy perspectives and predicting immense growth in the future.

What, then, brought about the complete *volte face* in the regime's attitude? The explanation lies very simply in the fact that agricultural performance during the past 3½ years, comprising the first half of the Seven-Year Plan of 1959-65, fell far short of the goals projected in the Plan, and the agricultural sector in fact entered a new phase of relative stagnation. Here is the underlying cause of the feverish Soviet preoccupation with agricultural matters in 1962, concretely expressed by the reorganization of agricultural administration, by the abandonment of the grass-rotation system, and finally by the price reform of June 1st. As long as agriculture was moving ahead and the prospects for its further development appeared favorable, peasant incentives and income were considered adequate if not indeed excessive. But when progress came to a halt for three years, then came the announcement of a "discovery" of agricultural ills—that incentives were insufficient, that only "idiots" would increase meat production under prevailing conditions, and that new "miracle cures" were going to be applied.

In specific terms, while the 1953-58 period saw significant increases in grain, livestock and raw material production as well as in the income of the farm population, the years 1959-61 brought agriculture to a new standstill. As Table VI shows, the general level of crop production in 1958—a record year by Soviet measure—was not matched in any later year. The same holds true for meat production after the record year 1959. The qualitative indicators of agricultural performance such as productivity also showed various signs of stagnation or even retrogression.[33] Moreover, without actually admitting it, Soviet authorities have hinted strongly that the income of the collective farmers declined in 1960 and 1961, for the first time in the post-Stalin era.

TABLE VI

Soviet Agricultural Production, 1958-61

(in millions of tons; eggs in billions of units)

	1958	1959	1960	1961
Total grain harvest	141.2	125.9	134.4	137.3
Of which				
Wheat	76.6	69.1	64.3	66.2
Corn for grain	16.7	12.0	18.7	24.1
Cotton	4.3	4.6	4.3	4.5
Sugar beets	54.4	43.9	57.7	52.5
Wool	0.32	0.36	0.36	0.37
Meat	7.7	8.9	8.7	8.8
Milk	58.7	61.7	61.7	62.5
Eggs	23.0	25.6	27.4	28.9

SOURCES: Compiled from *Narodnoe khoziaistvo SSSR v 1960 godu*, Moscow, 1961, pp. 375, 578, 412; *Izvestia*, March 6, 1962; and *Pravda*, January 23, 1962. Sugar beets production in 1961 was calculated by applying the 1960 procurement-production ratio to the announced total of government procurements in 1961; the resulting estimate may be low, since Cuban sugar imports may have led more of the beet crop to be utilized as fodder.

Needless to say, then, the agricultural sector fell well behind the targets set for it in the first three years of the ambitious Seven-Year Plan. Targets for the latest year, 1961, were fulfilled by only 89 percent in the case of grain; 74 percent in the case of meat; and 80 percent in the case of milk.[34] This means that in the remaining four years of the plan (1962-65) grain production must increase by 20 to 30 percent, meat production by over 80 percent, and milk production by more than 60 percent, if the plan targets are to be fulfilled.[35]

The Issue of Priorities

Among the reactions occasioned by the June 1st decree in the foreign press, one widespread comment has viewed the retail price rise, as well as the general

[33] For example, in the 1959-61 period there was a notable decline in the average weight per head of live animals purchased by the state from the *kolkhozy*: see *Miasnaia industriia*, No. 2, 1961, p. 3, and No. 4, 1961, p. 2.

[34] *Izvestia*, March 6, 1962.

[35] *Ibid.*; also Stenographic Report of the 21st CPSU Congress (in Russian), Moscow, 1959, Vol. I, p. 34.

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difficulties of Soviet agriculture in recent years, as resulting directly from an intensification of the Soviet policy of "guns instead of butter."

In the long-range sense, nothing could be truer than the assertion that "guns" are favored at the expense of the Soviet consumer and of those branches of the economy that produce for him. The enormous expenditures of the Soviet government on military preparedness and space exploration—reflecting a system of economic priorities that is tailored to accommodate Soviet international goals—place a tremendous strain on the whole Soviet economy, especially on its agricultural sector and on branches of industry which are consumer oriented.

At the same time, the "guns (or space) instead of butter" explanation is insufficient to account for the specific difficulties that Soviet agriculture has encountered in the past few years. As we have seen, the recent agricultural standstill followed a period of considerable growth from 1953 to 1958. The pressures of military and other high-priority expenditures have been present as a constant factor on the Soviet economic scene, acting as a brake on agricultural development both before 1959 and since. According to certain indications, there has been no increase of such pressures on agriculture in recent years—*i.e.,* no syphoning off of funds from the agricultural sector for military or other purposes. On the contrary, agriculture has suffered *relatively less* neglect since 1959, in terms of the distribution of centrally-allocated funds, than at almost any time in the past. The recent composition of Soviet investments—always one of the most sensitive indicators of agriculture's position *vis-à-vis* higher priority sectors— has been described as follows by the 1961 survey of the UN Economic Commission for Europe:

Few details of the sector composition of investment in 1961 are yet available; but it is clear that, for the second year running, a shift of centrally disposable resources towards agriculture has been taking place, more than offsetting the fall in collective-farm investment [*i.e.* that financed from funds of the *kolkhozy*] since 1959. As in 1960, state investment in agriculture rose by 22 percent, and in both years this represented a very considerable overfulfillment of the original plan target. This evident change in investment policy was particularly striking in 1961, when the overfulfillment of state agricultural investment plans contrasted vividly with underfulfillment in the economy as a whole and—it seems—in most other sectors, including industry.[36]

No doubt this shift of investments was undertaken with great reluctance and concern. Obviously, moreover, the effort was wholly inadequate to the problem, underscoring the fact that the regime was not and is not now prepared to undertake a transfer of investments into agriculture on a scale that could accomplish genuine good. Khrushchev is undoubtedly aware that the single biggest and most important step he could take to cure chronic ills would be to redirect major resources into the agricultural sector and into those branches of industry that produce agricultural machinery, fertilizers, weed-killers, *etc.* (now especially important given the increasing emphasis on intensified farming). Yet he and his colleagues remain firmly committed to the principle that funds cannot be diverted from higher priority budgetary expenditures, and any departure from this principle (as in 1960-61) is simply a grudging concession to economic pressure. This attitude was reflected in the course of the Central Committee Plenum last March. In his opening speech to the Plenum Khrushchev said:

. . . we have to build at least three new powerful factories designed to satisfy the needs of agriculture for tractors, agricultural machinery, and equipment for the mechanization of animal husbandry. These factories evidently will have to be built at the expense of a redistribution of capital investments and material outlays.[37]

Yet in his closing speech to the Plenum Khrushchev made a strong attack against the principle of such a redirection of funds, and this attack was iterated in unusually violent terms in the official announcements accompanying the June 1st decree.

Whatever the long-range effects of this attitude, the fact remains that the regime did not resort to any increased drain on the agricultural sector in order to finance higher priority expenditures in the period 1959-61. There is little foundation, then, for blaming the current standstill in agriculture exclusively on the military and space build-up.

Shades of the Stalinist Past

But if the "guns *vs.* butter" theory will not do, neither will the explanation that Khrushchev himself offers for the present setback. This explanation he stated very succinctly—and it seems sincerely—in a recent remark to an American journalist: "We are paying now for Stalin's mistakes in agriculture.[38] While no one could disagree with the view that the major share of the blame for the chronic ills of Soviet agriculture rests with Stalin, the present recurrence of stagnation, several years into the post-Stalin era, cannot be so easily dismissed.

[36] *Economic Survey of Europe: 1961,* UN Economic Commission for Europe, Geneva, 1962, Part I, p. II/19.

[37] *Izvestia,* March 6, 1962.

[38] Quoted in *The New York Times,* April 26, 1962, p. 10.

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There is no doubt that Khrushchev deserves credit for breaking away, whether voluntarily or under the pressure of circumstances, from the most irrational notions and practices of his predecessor. Without Khrushchev's reversal of Stalinist policy, there could have been no agricultural successes in the years 1953-58, and the sorely needed improvement in Soviet living conditions probably would have proceeded at a much slower pace. Yet the basic question remains whether Khrushchev, notwithstanding his criticism of the Stalinist past, has himself sufficiently departed from the methods by which agriculture was run when Stalin had his way. Numerous instances could be cited from the past nine years when Khrushchev was hesitant or inconsistent in his departure from old policies. More important, even now—as he tries anew to spur agriculture forward—certain aspects of his course show how much he remains enslaved in his way of thinking and choice of methods by the habits, traditional premises and "self-evident" truths of the past era. A few instances will serve to demonstrate.

1). Characteristic of Stalin's agricultural policies was an insistence on "absolute truths," inflexible directives. If the "center" became convinced that a particular method or technique of crop cultivation was "progressive," then this method was imposed in blanket fashion on all agricultural enterprises, irrespective of their specific conditions of soil, climate, mechanization, manpower, *etc.*

Khrushchev likewise betrays a maximalistic, irrational approach in some of his policies. Often he adopts a measure that may be rational in its basic premise, but goes to such excesses in applying it that he ends up simply replacing one irrationality with another. A case in point is his corn cultivation campaign, which has been pressed without consideration for the natural conditions of various regions, and which is expected to achieve results far beyond reasonable hopes. A comparable case in Khrushchev's present agricultural course is the decision adopted in March 1962 to abandon the so-called "Williams system" of grass rotation (*travopolye*). This system, long overstressed and sometimes unrealistically applied, was without doubt in need of a thorough overhaul, especially in light of the current aim of intensified agricultural production. Yet Khrushchev's assault on the *travopolye* is so total and inflexible, so unmindful of the additional inputs necessary if the rotation system is discarded, that it is bound to create widespread "anti-Williams" irrationalities in place of the "pro-Williams" irrationalities of the past.

2). Stalin's agricultural policies were based on a supercentralized system or administration, including the minutely-detailed planning at the "center" of the output and deliveries of even the smallest agricultural units. A few years ago Khrushchev introduced a series of measures which were highly publicized as efforts to eliminate the Stalinist over-centralization of agriculture. Yet now, in the course of his latest efforts to revitalize the agricultural sector, he has created a new administration that vies with any of the past in its tight, centralized control over agriculture. Dominated by the party *apparatchiki*, over whom top-to-bottom control is assured through party channels, the new agricultural administration has the right to interfere directly in the

Попы пытаются убедить человека, что если сегодня он плохо живет, то на небесах, в раю, ему будет хорошо. Чем же отличаются от этой проповеди травопольщики, которые в будущем обещают урожай?

(Из доклада товарища Н. С. Хрущева на Пленуме ЦК КПСС).

— *Плохи наши дела, коллега!*

Рисунок Н. ЛИСОГОРСКОГО

Caption above: Priests try to convince man that if his life is bad today, he will be well off in heaven, in paradise. How different from these prophets are the grass-rotationists, who promise a harvest in the future?

Caption below: "Our affairs are in a mess, colleague!" (Book is titled "Grass-rotation System"; building is the "Agricultural Institute.")

—From Krokodil (Moscow), March 20, 1962.

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internal organization of production of the *kolkhozy* and *sovkhozy*. Insofar as the *kolkhozy* are concerned, this new form of centralized interference in farming operations leaves them with little more independence than if they were *sovkhozy*. Thus, instead of giving agricultural enterprises greater freedom and scope for initiative, as his reforms of 1953-58 promised, Khrushchev has reverted to a tightly-centralized if more streamlined system of control under the aegis of the party apparatus. What is more, he has publicly stated that he views this instrument as the basic and most promising feature of his current agricultural course. While attaching more importance than did his predecessor to purely economic incentives to progress, Khrushchev apparently is still enslaved by the belief that organizational measures are decisive in determining economic development.

3). Under Stalin, incessant and often overlapping campaigns to spur popular effort toward the achievement of regime goals became virtually the *modus vivendi* of Soviet agriculture. Khrushchev has preserved and in fact greatly improved upon this device: agricultural campaigns are more grandiose, better organized, more astutely conducted than ever. But the basic theme remains the same: "one more campaign—one more effort—and the objective will be won."

Permanent campaigning has as one of its main sources a traditional Soviet delusion: like Stalin before him, Khrushchev persists in the belief that the higher and more ambitious planned targets are made, the better will be the performance. Yet past experience suggests that the exaggerated demands made on agriculture lead to incalculable harm. Since agricultural targets are interconnected with the rest of the general economic plan, the strain to meet inflated goals disrupts and disorganizes overall economic development. The emphasis laid on plan fulfillment encourages concentration on a few selected "prestige goals" at the expense of other necessary work, the neglect of which must be paid for at a later date. "Campaign" drives to meet particular targets involve huge additional costs in material and labor for what in the Soviet language is called *"shturmovshchina"* (literally, "attack-work"). Last but not least, the impossible performance demanded of agriculture impels a constant scramble to find scapegoats for failures, resulting in an enormously high turnover of trained agricultural personnel in the Soviet Union: the amount of human talent, education and experience wasted in this process defies description.

It is apparent, then, that many "remnants" of the Stalinist past remain entrenched in Khrushchev's policies of the present, helping to aggravate the perpetual disabilities of the agricultural sector.

* * *

The implications of all of the foregoing discussion can be summed up in a few simple surmises about the future prospects of Soviet agriculture. On one hand, it is possible and indeed probable that the new incentives provided for livestock production, combined with increased investments in the industries serving agriculture and a greater concentration in general on agricultural needs, will spur the agricultural sector out of its present period of stagnation. The increase of total area under crops as a result of the expected abandonment of *"travopolye"* will also raise production in the short run.

On the other hand, the present course of the regime does not come to grips with the many basic problems discussed above that led to the standstill in agriculture, suggesting the strong possibility that periods of stagnation will recur in the future. It can also be stated with certainty that the fantastic achievements planned by 1965 and 1970 remain as visionary as ever.

The Soviet agricultural system long ago proved its usefulness as an instrument of merciless exploitation in the drive to achieve a forced build-up of Soviet state power. The adaptability of this system to the entirely different—and still conditional—goal of securing a high living standard for all the Soviet people has yet to be proven.

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Crime and Punishment

EDITORS' NOTE: The introduction and implementation by the Khrushchev regime of laws extending capital punishment to categories of crime nowhere punishable by death outside the Communist orbit seem to mark an ominous turn in the post-1956 trend of Soviet domestic policy away from Stalinist terror towards a more rational and humane application of "socialist legality." The following two articles explore the motivations and significance of this new shift in policy, Mr. Lipson's in the broader perspective of Soviet legal doctrine and practice, and Mr. Willets' with particular reference to "economic crime."

Execution: Hallmark of "Socialist Legality"

By Leon Lipson

IN THE PAST fifteen months Soviet legislation has extended the discretionary application of the death penalty to seven categories of offenses previously punishable by lesser maximum sentences.[1] This manifestation of Soviet "humanism," comprising five separate decrees issued on four separate dates between May 5, 1961, and February 20, 1962, cannot be considered a single spasmodic reaction. It raises some questions about the role of capital punishment in Soviet criminal law and, going more deeply, about the role of criminal sanctions in the system of Soviet social control.

The death penalty appears in Soviet criminal legislation almost as consistently as does the claim that it is merely a temporary measure evoked by transitory necessity. One of the first acts of the new Soviet regime in 1917 was to abolish the death penalty at the front, which the Provisional Government had restored after first abolishing capital punishment in general; but the death penalty was reintroduced in early 1918, reabolished early in 1920, and re-reintroduced some months later.[2] Between these formal vicissitudes and the realities of official executions there could be no very close connection in a period that witnessed a social revolution, a con-

[1] Decrees of the Presidium, Supreme Soviet, USSR: May 5, 1961, *Vedomosti Verkhovnovo Soveta SSSR,* No. 19 (1054), item 207 (large-scale theft, counterfeiting, attacks by prisoners); July 1, 1961, *ibid.,* No. 27 (1062), item 291 (foreign-currency operations); February 15, 1962, *ibid.,* No. 8 (1095), item 83 (attacks on militiamen or people's guards); February 15, 1962, *ibid.,* No. 8 (1095), item 84 (aggravated rape); February 20, 1962, *ibid.,* No. 8 (1095), item 85 (bribery). The Supreme Soviet subsequently confirmed these decrees.

[2] See *Dekrety sovetskoi vlasti,* Moscow, 1957, vol. 1, pp. 9-10. The Soviet explanation for the ups and downs in the early years is that the Red Terror was a response to the White Terror; see M. D. Shargorodsky, in *Sovetskoe ugolovnoe pravo, Chast obshchaia,* Izd. Leningradskovo universiteta, 1960, p. 459-60.

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fused military situation, national-minority rebellions, the breakdown of old political authority, and shifting civil war. Even after the situation had become relatively stabilized in the early 1920's, during the period of the NEP, Lenin insisted on keeping the terror. In 1922 he wrote to Kursky, then Commissar of Justice, in connection with the compilation of the draft of a criminal code of the RSFSR:

The basic idea, I hope, is clear despite all the faults of the draft: to set out candidly a principled and politically correct (and not only a juridically narrow) provision furnishing a basis for the *essence and justification* of terror, its necessity, its limits.

The court must not do away with terror—to promise that would be self-deception, or deception—but must ground it and legalize it in a principled way, clearly, without humbug and without coloring over. It has to be formulated as broadly as possible, for only revolutionary law-consciousness and revolutionary conscience will fix the conditions of a more or less broad application in practice.[3]

The legislation of the early 1920's duly provided for the death penalty (by shooting, as always in Soviet legislation except for Fascist war criminals, who were hanged), stipulating however that it was imposed "temporarily in the quality of the highest measure of social defense, pending its complete abolition."[4] Until 1927, certain crimes committed by officials, as well as certain economic and other crimes, could be punished by death. Then, a manifesto of the Central Executive Committee on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the 1917 Revolution proclaimed that capital punishment was thenceforth to be applied only in cases of state crimes, military crimes, and armed robbery.[5] During the consolidation of Stalinism (another long-lasting "transitory" phenomenon) capital punishment was retroactively extended in 1929 to émigrés who had outlawed themselves by refusing to return to the Soviet Union; in 1932 it was made applicable to those who stole property of collective farms or cooperatives; and in the mid-1930's the procedural context of the Lex Kirov and other purge decrees facilitated the swiftness and certainty of its application in political cases.[6]

After the Second World War, in May 1947, application of the death penalty in time of peace was repealed in acknowledgement of "the exceptional devotion of the entire population of the Soviet Union to the Soviet homeland and the Soviet government" and of "the wishes of trade unions of workers and office-workers and other authoritative organizations expressing the opinion of broad social circles." Crimes previously punishable by death were to be punished by a maximum of 25 years' confinement.[7] At the 1948 session of the United Nations General Assembly the Soviet Union proposed universal repeal of the death penalty, a proposal which it claimed "was rejected on the insistence of the reactionary bloc of Anglo-American delegations and others adhering to them."[8]

In January 1950, again in professed response to "declarations proceeding from the national republics, from the trade unions, peasant organizations, and also from workers in culture," the 1947 decree was declared inapplicable, and the death penalty thus made applicable, to "traitors, spies, and subversives-diversionists." The reason given was an alleged strengthening of subversive activities by agencies of imperialistic states against the Soviet Union.[9] In 1954 another exception to the 1947 abolition of peacetime capital punishment was established for persons who commit murder in aggravating circumstances. While the 1958 fundamentals of criminal justice and the criminal codes enacted in conformity with them somewhat rationalized the inventory of crimes punishable by death, the penalty remained, accompanied by the ritual incantation, ". . . temporarily, pending its complete abolition . . . ."

The Death Penalty in Practice

Thus, virtually throughout the forty-five years since the October Revolution, with the exception of three interludes amounting altogether to about three and a half years, capital punishment has figured prominently in the formal Soviet legal system, quite apart from the

[3] Cited by B. S. Utevsky in *Ugolovnoe pravo: Obshchaia chast* (4th ed., Menshagin), Moscow, Yur. izd. Min yust. SSSR, 1948, pp. 495-6.

[4] Basic Fundamentals of Criminal Legislation of the USSR and Union Republics: Decree of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR, October 31, 1924, *Sobranie zakonov*, 1924, No. 24.

[5] Utevsky, *loc. cit.*, p. 499. For a list of the offenses punishable by death as state crimes, in force apparently as of 1957, see Karev, ed., *Ugolovnoe zakonodatelstvo SSSR i soiuznykh respublik*, Moscow, 1957, pp. 14-18. The editors warn the readers, however, that this compendium may "contain a number of obsolete norms." *Ibid.*, p. 4.

[6] Decree of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR, November 21, 1929, *Sobranie zakonov*, 1929, No. 76; Utevsky, *loc. cit.*, p. 499; Resolution of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR, December 1, 1934, USSR Law 1934, Text 459; Sept. 13, 1937, USSR Law 1937, Text 266. The two latter decrees were repealed in April 1956.

[7] Ukase of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, May 26, 1947; see *Ugolovnoe pravo* (2n ed., Goliakov), Moscow, Yur. izd. Min yust. SSSR, 1947, pp. 347-8.

[8] Utevsky, *loc. sit.*, p. 499.

[9] Decree of the Presidium, Supreme Soviet, USSR, January 12, 1950, *Vedomosti Verkhovnovo Soveta SSSR*, 1950 No. 3; see Karev, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

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How Is That Again?

The All-Russian Communist Party, in order to assist the further development of the courts of justice . . . , will strive to induce all workmen without exception to perform judicial duties and finally replace the system of punishment by measures of an educational character.

—From the second program of the CPSU adopted in 1919.

The second program of the party has been carried out.

—From the new program of the CPSU adopted in 1962.

activities of the Special Boards and the secret police. The field of its application has varied but on the whole has been wider than in most other states retaining capital punishment, and the number of cases has been substantial. Yet, Soviet legal writers steadfastly continue to assert that capital punishment is not a regular feature of Soviet law.[10] The evidence adduced for this assertion usually comprises two items: first, Soviet legislative references to the death penalty consistently qualify it as a temporary and exceptional measure; and second, in the inventory of punitive measures available under Soviet law, the death penalty is set apart from the others. Such arguments suggest that it has been easier for the Soviet rulers to legalize the terror, as Lenin wished, than to follow his instruction to omit the humbug and coloring over.

To judge from reports of capital cases published in the legal and popular press, the main incidence of the death penalty on the eve of the recent expansion of the capital list fell on former policemen in the period of Nazi occupation, who were being hunted down and tried for treason and murder, and on others who had committed murder in aggravating circumstances. The aggravating circumstances most often invoked were recidivism, atrocious brutality, abuse of the victim's helplessness or dependence, and ganging-up on the victim. From time to time the reports of capital as well as lesser cases seemed to indicate that there were special targets: for example, those who had committed crimes while drunk, or members of minor religious groups such as Baptists, Adventists, and Roman Catholics. Some of the cases also appeared to suggest the existence of a judge-made "felony-murder" doctrine, similar to that which has obtained in some common-law jurisidictions, whereby a homicide, even though committed without premeditation or even perhaps without intent to kill, could be assimilated to premeditated murder if it took place in connection with the commission of some other grave crime such as robbery, rape, or arson. Considerable prominence was given in the reports to cases of criminals who had killed for gain; mention was also made, with lesser frequency, of criminals who had killed out of vengeance. In all of these situations, many of which often overlapped, what counted toward imposition of the death penalty was the killing rather than the drunkenness, the lust for gain, or the vengeance, but it should be noted that, if all the other elements were present, it appeared to be unnecessary (at least before the 1958 Fundamentals) that the victim actually have died.[11]

The Death Penalty in Theory

Soviet scholars have never quite come to grips with the need to find a justification for the death penalty. Faced with the record of opposition to the death penalty expressed by Marx and Engels, they have sought to differentiate between its applications in bourgeois and socialist societies:

The classics of Marxism always objected to the application of the death penalty in bourgeois states, because that

[10] *E.g.*, N. D. Durmanov, in *Osnovy sovetskovo gosudarstva i prava,* Moscow, Yur. izd. Min. yust. SSSR, 1947, p. 538; V. M. Chkhikvadze, *Sovetskoe voennoe-ugolovnoe pravo*, 1948, p. 233; Utevsky, *loc. cit.*, p. 499; A. Dm. Solovev, *Voprosy primeneniia nakazaniia po sovetskomu ugolovnomu pravu,* Moscow, Gosiurizdat, 1958, p. 49; A. A. Gertsenzon, *Ob osnovakh ugolovnovo zakonodatelstva soiuza SSSR i soiuznykh respublik,* Moscow, Gosiurizdat, 1959, pp. 46-7; Shargorodsky, *loc. cit.*, p. 461; G. Anashkin, "The Humanism of Soviet Law," *Sovetskaia yustitsiia,* 1961, No. 24 (December 1961), pp. 1-3.

[11] Se Solovev, *op. cit.*, p. 52, n. 1: "We should recognize as being fully justified the resolution of the Presidium of the Supreme Court of the RSFSR of May 21, 1957, in the case of S., which rejected the protest of the Public Procurator of the RSFSR and accepted as correct the application of the penalty of death by shooting to S. on the ground that by threats with firearms he had raped and robbed A., a mother with many children, and in an effort to conceal these crimes attempted to kill his victim: he bound her hands, blindfolded her, stuck into her mouth a stick with a rag, slashed her in the stomach, struck her in the chest with a knife, and supposing that his victim was dead hid himself. A. was discovered by passers-by and rescued (Bulletin of the Supreme Court of the USSR, 1957, No. 4, pp. 41-42)." This makes it clear that Solovev would require an intent to kill, though not the completion of the act by the victim's death.

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measure is applied there to the toilers. But they never denied the necessity of resorting to that measure in regard to enemies of the people. Lenin said that " . . . no revolutionary movement can get along without the death penalty and that the whole question is simply *against which class* the weapon of the death penalty will be pointed by a given government."[12]

A somewhat different distinction between the use of capital punishment in the Soviet Union and in other countries was advanced by a practitioner and connoisseur, A. Ia. Vyshinsky:

. . . the application of such a measure . . . as the death penalty has always been considered by Soviet legislation, in contrast to the legislation of the overwhelming majority of other countries, including such countries as the United States of America and Great Britain, not as a customary measure of punishment in the general system of criminal-law measures, but as an exceptional phenomenon evoked by necessity created by circumstances likewise of an exceptional order.[13]

To go more deeply into the motives for the application of the death penalty in Soviet courts, one must consider the connection that is thought to obtain between punishment and crime in general. A penal system that supposedly abjures punitive aims in favor of reform and rehabilitation—as exponents of the Soviet system claimed for it up till the late 1950's—can have no room for capital punishment unless the rehabilitation envisaged is to be posthumous, or is to occupy only the short interval between the pronouncement and execution of the sentence *à la mode de* Dostoievsky. A more likely justification of the death penalty, namely that it deters others from the commission of similar crimes, depends for its cogency on the strength of the supposition that others are in fact deterred. Soviet criminology, however, has turned up no accessible evidence that existence of the death penalty does deter more effectively than the existence of other penalties; and there does not seem to have been even any serious thought given to the possibility that some types of crime, and some types of criminals, might be deterred while others might not be.

Although Soviet criminology nominally adheres to a popular sort of Pavlovism according to which the deterrent (a known contingent penalty) checks the behavior of the conscious organism, there is no evidence that the incidence of capital crimes in the Soviet Union has fallen when the death penalty was imposed, or risen when it was lifted, or that the connection between the two has even been empirically studied. The possibility that capital punishment is applied in the Soviet Union in accordance with a defective theory of criminal causality seems less likely, however, than the possibility that no theory is involved at all. Whatever crimes have seemed most outrageous to the politically controlling forces at a given time have been made punishable by death; the worse the crime, the heavier the punishment. Thus, the prime purpose of capital punishment would appear to be not to constrain the acts of the lawbreaker but to relieve the feelings of the lawgiver—and, behind him, of the community.

These difficulties with capital punishment are not unique to the Soviet system. They are, however, intensified by the Soviet claims that (a) the predominant method of controlling crime and antisocial activity in the Soviet Union is being shifted from coercion to persuasion; and (b) all the necessary social conditions for the complete eradication of criminality have been created by the Soviet state and people. Soviet action to continue, let alone extend, the application of the harshest measure of punishment available to a non-religious society that has abjured torture must necessarily throw doubt on these claims.

The Bullets Range Farther

By the decrees of 1961 and 1962, four economic and three non-economic offenses have been made punishable by death, at the discretion of the sentencing authorities. The economic category comprises theft of state or public property in especially large amounts; the circulation, or fabrication with intent to circulate, counterfeit money and securities, performed as a business; speculation in foreign-exchange valuables or securities, done as a business, or in large amounts, or by one previously convicted of such speculation; and bribe-taking in aggravating circumstances, committed by responsible officials, repeated offenders, or extortionists. In the non-economic category, the decrees authorize the death penalty against especially dangerous recidivists and persons convicted of grave crimes who, in places of deprivation of freedom, terrorize prisoners who have set their feet on the path of reform, commit attacks on the prison administration, organize criminal groups with such an aim, or take active part in such groups;" against those who, in aggravating circumstances, make attempts on the life of members of the militia or people's volunteer guards; and those who commit rape in a group, as recidivists, with particularly grave consequences, or against minors.

[12] B. S. Utevsky, in *Ugolovnoe pravo* (2d ed., Goliakov), Moscow, Yur. izdat. Min. yust. SSSR, 1947, p. 119.

[13] *Pravda,* May 27, 1947, quoted by Chkhikvadze, *loc. cit.,* p. 223.

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The most spectacular publicity has been given to some of the economic crimes whose perpetrators have been punished under the new decrees. The Soviet press dilated, for example, on the trial of two currency speculators who were accused of having bought and resold 13 million (old) rubles worth of foreign currency and gold coins. The Moscow City Court initially sentenced them to 15 years' deprivation of freedom, but on the protest of the procurator the Supreme Court of the RSFSR increased the sentence to death by shooting even though the offenses had taken place before the enactment of the 1961 decree authorizing capital punishment.[14] Other groups of currency speculators were sentenced, some of them to death, in Georgia and Lithuania.[15] The members of an inter-republican band of thieves who stole large stocks of raw silk from a combine warehouse in Moldavia on several occasions and then disposed of them in Georgia were tried in Moldavia and the leader sentenced to death.[16] A counterfeiter of 50-kopeck and one-ruble coins in Ivanovo, RSFSR, was tried and shot.[17] An official in Piatigorsk, the ringleader of a group which embezzled large amounts of grain products by falsifying records, was sentenced to death.[18] One estimate based on Soviet press reports reckons the number of death sentences imposed since the first extension of the capital crimes list in May 1961 at 200.[19]

[14] *Pravda,* July 21, 1961, p. 6.
[15] *Zaria vostoka,* December 2, 1961; *Pravda,* February 12, 1962.
[16] *Izvestia,* September 13, 1961.

—"Citizen Judges, here are my guarantors!" (Document reads: "I guarantee for Ivanov. He is as meek as a lamb.")

—From Krokodil (Moscow), January 20, 1962.

There is some probability that the Soviet courts are now trying to steer a middle course after the initial overzealous application of the new decrees. One can detect a significant difference in tone between the resolutions adopted by the Supreme Court of the USSR at its plenary sessions for 1961 and 1962. In 1961, after the May and July decrees, the Supreme Court resolution pointed out that:

. . . in the hearing of cases of [especially dangerous] crimes the courts often commit serious errors, which consist of an underappraisal of the social danger of these crimes and the resultant pronouncement of light measures of punishment, particularly in cases of pilfering state or public property in especially large amounts.[20]

In 1962, however, the fiinger of alarm was wagged in the other direction:

. . . the courts, in setting penalties, must not allow themselves to underrate measures of public influence and measures of criminal punishment not involving deprivation of freedom with regard to individuals who have committed less dangerous crimes and who are capable of reforming without being isolated from society.[21]

Significance of Wider Severity

It is unlikely that all the extensions of the death penalty have a single explanation. The government's determination to crack down on unauthorized economic activity by shooting the entrepreneurs—rather than by modifying the economic system that creates a social need for such activity—could account for some of the decrees, but economic and non-economic offenses were chronologically mixed in the series of measures embodying the extensions. It would even be hazardous to infer an increased prevalence of a given type of offense from the fact that the penalty has been made heavier, although such an inference would certainly seem more reasonable than the official Soviet explanation that the augmentation of the penalties followed a decline in criminality. A

[17] *Pravda,* March 11, 1962.
[18] *Pravda,* May 5, 1962.
[19] *New York Times,* April 24, 1962, p. 3, col. 1.
[20] *Pravda,* September 14, 1961.
[21] *Izvestia,* May 17, 1962.

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second possible explanation would construe the recent decrees, in conjunction with the growth of "non-courts" (anti-parasite tribunals, comrades' courts, the people's volunteer guards), as evidence that the regime is seeking devices of control to make up for what was relinquished in the mid-1950's with the abolition of the Special Boards and the institution of limited reforms of criminal procedure. A third explanation would account for the recent increase of penal severity as part of the price that unidentified "liberals" had to pay to unidentified "conservatives" in return for reforms in other areas.

Whether the economic, the administrative, or the negotiatory explanation hits the truth or a part of it, one may expect the Soviet authorities to continue belittling the use of the death penalty regardless of its actual frequency. A recent comprehensive article on "Problems of General Study of Punishment in the Theory of Soviet Law at the Present Stage" curiously passes over the problem of capital punishment, presumably because it could not be fitted into the author's conceptual framework of pressure toward reform and rehabilitation.[22] Another scholar, writing in support of the 1961 decrees, accommodates the death penalty to Soviet humanism in the following way:

> **Among the more important provisions characterizing the humanism of punishment according to Soviet criminal law are: the recognition of the death penalty as an exceptional and temporary measure . . . , the quite limited quantity of crimes punishable thereby, and the limitation of the possibility of its application by a number of additional conditions; . . . .**
>
> **However . . . socialist humanism has another side. In necessary cases it contemplates the application of revolutionary violence, not only of persuasion but also of coercion, the application of severe and strict measures of criminal punishment. And that is understandable; after all, there are crimes which already by reason of their character do not merit any sort of condescension, and in such cases humaneness must be shown first of all to society, to him who has suffered from the crime.**
>
> **. . . our court practice has now basically overcome the erroneous view of deprivation of freedom as the main, basic measure of punishment. There has come to be a wider application of measures of punishment not connected with the deprivation of freedom.[23]**

It would doubtless do violence to the author's intended meaning to suggest that in the Soviet Union the extension of the death penalty is a particularly notable instance of the "wider application of measures of punishment not connected with the deprivation of freedom."

[22] M. D. Shargorodsky, in *Sovetskoe gosudarstvo i pravo*, 1961, No. 10, p. 136.

[23] G. Anashkin, *loc. cit.* (note 10 above), p. 2.

The Wages of Economic Sin

By Harry Willets

THE NEW SOVIET LAWS OF May 1961 and February 1962 extending the list of crimes subject to capital punishment stand out in grim and alarming contrast against the background of Soviet legal developments since the death of Stalin. The most disturbing of the innovations introduced by these laws is the legalization of the death penalty, by shooting, for serious offenses in any of four different categories of "economic" crime: embezzlement of state property, counterfeiting, illegal currency transactions, and bribe-taking.

The Soviet Union was indeed not the first country of the orbit to impose the death penalty for serious economic crimes, similar laws having already been enacted by Bulgaria in 1954, Hungary in 1958, and Poland in 1960. However, the Soviet legislation has excited much more comment outside the bloc than did these earlier moves, and the common reaction abroad has, quite understandably, been one of horrified bewilderment. For in most if not all Western countries, although those who consider capital punishment bar-

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barous in any circumstances are no doubt still a minority, even the most intransigent advocates of its retention would never dream of agreeing that offenses against property, contraventions of exchange regulations, or the like should be punishable by execution.

Recent Soviet statements—backed by a quotation from Lenin evidently intended to discourage questioners at home—affirm that the CPSU has never objected to capital punishment in principle, and that it adjusts its penal practice to its current social program. It is also safe to assume that any humanitarian outcries abroad against the new measures will be dismissed by Soviet spokesmen as simply a hypocritical manifestation of rage and frustration: are not the "rotten elements" in Soviet society carriers of capitalist infection and "objectively", therefore, agents of imperialism? However, for all those outside observers who, without modifying their objections to the one-party state, shared the relief of the Soviet peoples when Stalin's successors showed themselves disposed to be more rational and humane than their late master—for those who, however great their misgivings about Khrushchev as a world statesman, have given him credit for impressive domestic reforms—these grim innovations in Soviet penal practice can only be a cause of genuine dismay.

Executions of Economic Offenders

The Soviet press, particularly in the past six months, has given much prominence to reports of trials that culminated in death sentences, and has also published leading articles calling for still wider publicity. This would appear to indicate that the government wants to maximize the deterrent effect of the executions. There can be little doubt that the new severity of the courts has made a very deep impression on the Soviet public.

Some of those sentenced to execution under the new measures were convicted of heinous crimes involving violence against the person, not necessarily resulting in death.[1] But the press has given much more space to accounts of the trial and conviction of persons charged with economic offenses. A partial listing, based on press reports, of those sentenced to death for such offenses follows (source in parentheses):

[1] Those executed for crimes involving lesser degrees of violence included a paroled convict who struck a woman pay-clerk and snatched her briefcase (*Sovetskaia Latvia,* April 6, 1962), two members of a Leningrad gang which robbed a grocery store, wounding two militiamen (*Vecherny Leningrad,* March 2, 1962), and two Armenians who wounded the pilot of a plane which they attempted to hijack in order to escape abroad.

Four people including one woman, convicted at Vilna of illegal transactions involving foreign and Tsarist (gold) currency to the value of some 13 million old rubles (*Sovetskaia Litva,* January 26, 30, 31, February 7 and 11, 1962).

Two members of a ring of currency speculators in Moscow (*Pravda,* March 3, 1962).

One Suvorov (alias Zavarov), convicted at Ivanovo of counterfeiting 50-kopek and 1-ruble pieces (*ibid.,* March 11, 1962).

Kobylitsin, a habitual criminal, convicted at Nikolaiev of shopbreaking (*Pravda Ukrainy,* March 15, 1962).

Kleimanov, a former senior bookkeeper in the Kutaisi Automobile Plant, convicted of embezzling more than 200,000 rubles of state funds (*Zaria vostoka,* March 17, 1962).

Kakiashvili, convicted of participating in a ring of currency speculators at Tiflis (*ibid.*).

The chief of the electrical power network at Navoi and an accomplice, convicted of embezzling "tens of thousands of rubles" by diverting state funds to a bogus prospecting enterprise (*Pravda vostoka,* March 20, 1962).

Two members of a ring of currency speculators and smugglers in Azerbaijan (*Bakinsky rabochi,* April 18, 1962).

Alide Abram, a cashier employed by the port authority at Tallin, convicted of embezzling 70,000 rubles over a period of years by fattening wage bills (*Sovetskaia Estonia,* April 19, 1962).

A procurement official in Turkmenia, convicted of embezzlement (*Turkmenskaia iskra,* April 25, 1962).

The ringleader of a group of swindlers at the Grain Reception Center in Mineralnye Vody (*Pravda,* April 5, 1962).

The Kopchak brothers, former cattle procurement officials, convicted of embezzling state funds and of speculating in foreign currency and Tsarist gold coins (*Pravda Ukrainy,* May 16, 1962).

The leader of an embezzlement ring based on a state farm at Pavlodar, which allegedly cheated the state of some 400,000 new rubles (*Kazakhstanskaia pravda,* May 18, 1962).

Three members of a ring of corrupt Dniepropetrovsk trade network officials, convicted of stealing and selling large amounts of fruit for their personal profit (*Pravda Ukrainy,* June 6, 1962).

Benyamin Gulko and Foka Fuks, convicted of engaging, together with their wives, in illegal currency dealings involving millions of rubles, as well as in speculative trading of industrial goods, astrakhan pelts, and articles manufactured from gold (*Pravda Ukrainy,* June 12, 1962).

It should be noted that the crimes listed above varied greatly in seriousness, if the amount of financial loss to the state is the criterion. Moreover, it is significant that many of them had actually been committed, either wholly or in part, before the enactment of the laws

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introducing capital punishment for the particular offenses involved.

The preparation and conduct of the trials for "economic" crimes also present several points of interest. Not only the currency speculators but also some of the major embezzlers were brought to justice not by the militia but by the security police (KGB). In several cases, a collegium of the Supreme Court of the republic in which the crime was committed acted as the court of first instance—sometimes holding a special session in a provincial town for this purpose—and although in some cases those convicted were accorded the right of appeal to the Supreme Court Presidium, in others the initial sentence was declared final. Press reports indicated that, where appeals were lodged, the original convictions were upheld and the death sentences duly carried out. Newspaper accounts of the trials invariably state that representatives of the public who were present in court "expressed their approval" of the death sentences.

Official Explanations

Soviet spokesmen deny that the wider application of capital punishment was made necessary by an increase in crime. The standard official explanation is the one given by N. R. Mironov, head of the Section for Administrative Organs in the CPSU Central Committee: namely, that "it is not the incidence (of particularly dangerous crimes) which has grown, but rather the implacability of the Soviet people to all elements that bring shame on Soviet society and mar Soviet life." [2] Mironov, however, is uncomfortably aware of the incongruity between the new legislation and the official picture of Soviet society in the present and the near future, as given in the 1961 Party Program. He writes:

Some people think that the intensification of judicial repression affecting especially dangerous crimes does not correspond to the character of our state and contradicts the course taken by the party towards further restriction of the state's administrative and punitive functions and their gradual replacement by methods of public influence and indoctrination. It is impossible to agree with this.

The official contention is that there are very few especially dangerous criminals, but that these few cannot be deterred from crime, except perhaps by the threat of physical destruction. Thus Mironov, in the same article, quotes approvingly from a letter to the Central Committee, signed by 45 officials of the Southern Kazakhstan Geological Administration, to the effect that:

It is necessary to destroy without mercy the incorrigible thieves and hooligans who, although comprising an insignificant fraction of one percent of Soviet society (.001%), constantly inflict such damage and unhappiness upon it. They are by nature cowardly nonentities when faced with annihilation. They are brave and insolent when they see that they can act almost with impunity.

Soviet statistics do not permit us to judge whether there has been, in fact, an increase in the number of "especially dangerous" criminals. It is freely admitted, however, that the police, the courts, and the prison camps lost much of their terror for hardened criminals in recent years. Outside observers, lacking the simple faith of the South Kazakh geologists that the number of dangerous criminals in the USSR is held down to an insignificant 2,000 or so by the dialectic of Soviet social development, must inevitably suspect that the relaxation of penal severity also enticed many petty crooks to enlarge the scope and scale of their operations.

Crime Without Punishment

It has been a familiar cliché in the Soviet Union that crime should be prevented "not by the cruelty but by the inevitability" of the penalties prescribed by the law.[3] The new measures extending capital punishment make a mockery of this claim. The threat of execution would surely be unnecessary if would-be embezzlers, bribe-takers and currency speculators thought that their chances of escaping detection and long terms of imprisonment were slight. But the militia, always notoriously lax, has evidently not improved of late: "Vicious criminals often escape retribution because the militia is inefficient and ill-informed," declared *Bakinsky rabochy* (May 13, 1962).

Nor would corruption among Soviet judges and law enforcement officers appear to be uncommon. Mironov, for instance, writes of the need to "prevent dishonest and dubious persons from penetrating into the prosecutors' offices the militia and the courts" and to "inculcate honesty and resistance to temptation" among the servants of the law. Again, at a conference of policemen, prosecutors and judges in the Georgian Republic, the Chairman of the republic Supreme Court complained about judicial officers taking bribes to shield criminals and urged them to cleanse their ranks of morally unstable persons.[4] The press has, in fact, reported many specific cases of law-enforcement officers conniving at crimes in return for a consideration or taking bribes to

[2] See article in *Partinaia zhizn,* No. 5, 1962.

[3] *E.g., Izvestia,* December 11, 1960.

[4] *Zaria vostoka,* June 14, 1962.

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tamper with the course of justice. In one such case, involving the fraudulent use of state funds to build houses for officials, militia officers were implicated in the crime and were among its beneficiaries;[5] in another, a woman assistant public prosecutor was charged with having offered to arrange the release of a man arrested on a serious charge if his relatives would pay her 20,000 rubles.[6]

Even honest Soviet policemen, prosecutors, and judges, it appears, are often under a different sort of pressure to temper zeal with discretion. Mironov castigates party committees for sometimes interfering improperly in court cases to protect Communists who have committed crimes. *Izvestia* (December 11, 1960) also complained about "persons who have no business there thronging the back-rooms of justice," "not friends or relations" of the accused, but bureaucrats anxious to "prevent the washing of dirty linen in public" or "save the credit of some organization."

Although the establishment of the "people's volunteer guards" to assist in keeping order and apprehending petty criminals might have been expected to enable the militia to concentrate more effectively on graver crimes, this does not seem to have been the case. For one thing, the *druzhiny* in many places soon "lost their fire" or even disintegrated.[7] And the militia, on its side, often chose to interpret the "progressive transference of state functions to the public" as permission to reduce its own activities. According to Mironov, "in some places the whole burden of the struggle against crime was put on the people's guard and the comrades' courts.[8]

JUDGES ALSO DREW exaggerated conclusions from the party's apparent policy in the years 1956-60, which seemed to favor the patient reeducation of criminals rather than savage repression. Thus, at the 22nd Party Congress last year, it was noted that "officers of the courts . . . are often guilty of unjustifiable liberalism in the treatment of hardened and dangerous criminals." Habitual criminals were often remanded to the tutelage of some collective—a measure intended chiefly for first offenders—or were paroled and prematurely restored to liberty.[9] "We are still feeling the effects of the passion

THE OLD TEMPTRESS

—"I am still quite successful!"
(Handbag is labeled: "Bribe")

—From Krokodil (Moscow), June 30, 1962.

for remand which existed some two years ago", wrote the Soviet jurist B. Nikiforov in *Izvestia* (May 23, 1962). At the Georgian conference of law-enforcement officials mentioned earlier, the higher courts and even the Supreme Court of the republic and its collegia were rebuked for groundlessly reducing sentences handed down by people's courts, and a warning was given that "officials who display unjustifiable leniency" would be "called to account." [10]

During the period of greater leniency the dangerous criminal, even when sentenced according to his deserts, sometimes might enjoy the relatively mild regime of a labor camp intended primarily for the reeducation of petty offenders. A Ukrainian newspaper (*Pravda Ukrainy,* February 8, 1961) attributed the increase of crime in the Berdyansk area partly to such soft treatment of dangerous criminals, who were not always segregated and instead "lived gratis in a hotel atmosphere" for the duration of their confinement, with "flower-beds, . . . wall-newspapers, gay music from loudspeakers, a ten-year school, film-shows twice weekly, musical instruments, playing fields, parcels and money orders from outside" to brighten their lives. "But for the barbed

[5] Reported in *Partinaia zhizn,* No. 9, 1962.

[6] *Sovetskaia Kirghizia,* March 15, 1961.

[7] *E.g.,* see A. F. Gorkin, in *Partinaia zhizn,* No. 22, 1960; *Bakinsky rabochy,* May 13, 1962; Mironov, *loc. cit.* (fn. 2).

[8] Article in *Kommunist,* No. 3, 1961.

[9] See, *e.g.,* Mironov, *loc. cit.* (fn. 2); *Kommunist,* No. 4, 1962; *Kommunist* (Armenian daily), February 27, 1962; *Pravda Ukrainy,* February 8, 1961.

[10] *Zaria vostoka,* June 11, 1962.

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wire and the guards," remarked the paper, "no one would know that these were criminals."

This sort of leniency is no longer tolerated. Soviet government policy now stresses the need for strict discrimination, both by the courts and in places of confinement, between dangerous criminals and petty offenders. As Suslov put it at the 22nd Congress, "while utilizing all means of indoctrination and persuasion [to combat crime], the state should also unflinchingly apply measures of coercion, its punitive sword, in its dealings with inveterate and dangerous criminals." [11]

All these strictures against the laxness of recent years undoubtedly encouraged the extreme severity with which the courts have lately been applying the laws extending capital punishment. The zeal of the courts has, indeed, been such that some recent Soviet statements have acknowledged a danger that judicial officers who earlier reacted from excessive severity to exaggerated leniency may now veer back—in the words of B. Nikiforov—to "an equally unjustified harshness." In his *Izvestia* article quoted earlier, Nikiforov bluntly stated that "the recent promulgation of laws increasing punishment" for some crimes "has been taken by certain persons as a signal for the general intensification of repression."

The Roots of Economic Crime

For all the insistence of the Soviet authorities that the laws extending capital punishment are aimed at a handful of irreclaimable criminals, there can be little doubt that the new measures are intended to frighten the very large number of people directly engaged or indirectly implicated in "economic crime."

Peculation, bribe-taking, and illegal trading are commonly characterized by Soviet spokesmen as "survivals of capitalism in the consciousness of the people," as forms of "parasitism" "without roots in the soil of Soviet society." Mironov has advanced four reasons for the hardiness of these "survivals": the inevitable time-lag between changes in the conditions of life and their reflection in the mentality of the people; the influence of vicious imperialist propaganda designed to reactivate "property habits alien to us," the weakening of parental control during the war, and the difficulties of the immediate postwar years.[12] (Pernicious foreign influences mentioned by Soviet writers include not only contacts with tourists from the West and Western broadcasts, but even some of the Soviet government's voluntary cultural imports. Thus, a recent article in the Armenian newspaper *Kommunist* [June 12, 1962] accused "some Soviet officials" of "playing into the hands of the imperialists" by purchasing and exhibiting corrupt foreign films.)

Some of the reasons offered by Mironov seem valid enough: the orphaned or broken homes of wartime must certainly have swelled the ranks of the criminal community, and the bitter struggle for existence after the war can hardly have raised the moral standards of the people. But the rest of his analysis, at best, distorts and obscures the truth. As for the claimed time-lag between "being" and the "consciousness" of the masses, it would be more accurate to say that a considerable part of the Soviet population remains impervious to official ideals and is acutely aware of the contradictions between the professions of the regime and the practice of its bureaucrats. And while many in the Soviet Union, especially discontented youngsters, no doubt cynically admire a distorted image of the West, it would be more honest to acknowledge this as a natural expression of frustration and dissatisfaction.

All this, however, is still inadequate to explain the wide prevalence and gravity of "economic crime" in the Soviet Union. This weedy growth thrives especially on material shortages and bureaucratic hypertrophy, and there is no doubt that the Soviet economy and administrative system provide particularly favorable conditions for its proliferation.

UNLESS THEIR ACTIVITIES are kept under close independent scrutiny, corrupt Soviet officials are often quick to exploit shortages for their own profit. A housing scandal brought to light in the Tadzhik Republic last April serves as an example.[13] A group of officials variously employed in the executive committee of the Dushanbe soviet, a local building concern, and other key offices (all described by the press as "united by the slavish worship of profit" and "living by the beastly concepts of capitalism") systematically extorted bribes from local citizens in need of housing accommodations. Apartments were "sold" as soon as the foundations were laid, and documents authenticating the claims of the prospective occupants were forged. The former chairman of the executive committee of the soviet, Babadzhanov, was among those involved.

A more elaborate but extremely common abuse is conspiracy to conceal and sell for private profit part of the output of an enterprise or part of the intake of a procurement agency. A case of this kind uncovered in Kirghizia last year involved one of the republic's deputy

[11] *Pravda,* October 23, 1961.
[12] *Kommunist,* No. 3, 1961.
[13] See *Kommunist Tadzhikistana,* April 21, 1962.

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ministers of trade, a former chairman of the Kirghiz Gosplan, and at least three departmental heads in key economic agencies, and the chief conspirators in turn had agents in finance and supply organizations, factories, and the trade network. Using state funds, materials, and manufacturing and distributing facilities, they produced and sold on their own account large quantities of high-priced woollen and rayon goods, bribing inspectors and bookkeepers in order to conceal their operations.[14] In another case at Sverdlovsk, a high official of the RSFSR Ministry of State Farms and other important functionaries, using "inveterate speculators" as middlemen, feloniously disposed of large amounts of timber.[15]

Officials of trade and procurement agencies have been prominent among those prosecuted for embezzlement. At Dnepropetrovsk, thirteen officials were adjudged guilty of accumulating large undeclared surpluses of fruit by juggling their accounts, selling them, and pocketing the proceeds. Three of them, who were sentenced to death, had accumulated 2.5 million old rubles in this fashion.[16] In Moldavia, a father and his two sons, employed in a procurement agency, were found to have misappropriated valuable astrakhan pelts over a period of at least five years, selling them through middlemen on the open market at Kishinev.[17] In Turkmenia, the director of a procurement agency (sentenced to execution) and his accomplices had swindled the state by recording purchases of melons at higher prices than were actually paid.[18] A mill examiner (also executed) was found guilty, together with others, of filching hundreds of tons of grain by weighing light and exaggerating shrinkage.[19]

Corrupt officials who engage in such activities have found currency speculators—also a major target of the laws extending capital punishment—useful accomplices in the disposal and concealment of their loot. Since bank savings accounts are open to police scrutiny and hoards of rubles may be rendered valueless overnight by government currency measures, swindlers have to find some way of investing large sums safely. Currency speculators have catered to this need by acting as "brokers" for other members of the criminal community. Thus, many of those recently convicted by the courts for embezzlement and bribe-taking were found to have in their possession "vegetables" (US dollars), "horses" (British sovereigns), or "solids" (Tsarist gold rubles) purchased from illegal currency dealers. An instance was the economic conspiracy case in the Kirghiz Republic, already described. According to the KGB chief for the republic, "some of the criminals, with their embezzled money, bought large quantities of Tsarist coins and foreign currency from speculators." [20]

Stimulants to Corruption

Apart from the laxity of the police and the facilities available to strategically placed officials for covering up their peculations, there are still other impediments to the effective elimination of bureaucratic graft in the Soviet Union. One is public apathy. In a number of the recently exposed cases of embezzlement, the culprits had brazenly operated for lengthy periods—as one report put it—"under the eyes of a large collective." Perhaps many in the USSR resignedly accept the view, attributed to the convicted extortionists at Dushanbe (see above), that "nothing moves without grease." Moreover, it is understandable that the ordinary Soviet citizen should hesitate to denounce bureaucratic crooks when he sees their activities ignored by superior officials in the best position to know about those activities. The criminal nature of the operations of the Kishinev procurement agents who sold quantities of astrakhan fleeces for their private profit must have been an open secret, yet the culprits not only had operated with impunity for five years but had been officially commended for zeal and honesty.

The eagerness of local authorities to hush up scandal in their bailiwicks has often helped dishonest bureaucrats to escape the consequences of their crimes. In some cases the malefactor has been saved by timely transfer to another responsible post, where he could begin a fresh career of peculation. Thus, according to recent disclosures, when the head of the supply office of an enterprise at Zheleznogorsk was caught peculating, his "punishment" was reappointment as head of the enterprise's railroad transport section. And when the same enterprise wanted to get rid of a dishonest stores manager, the local party organization recommended him as suitable for election to a *kolkhoz* chairmanship.[21] Common knowledge that the bureaucracy looks after its own, and that local party bosses in particular often obstruct justice by insisting upon disciplinary measures within the party organization instead of by court proceedings, must inevitably deter many public-spirited citizens from denouncing corrupt bureaucrats.

[14] See article by P. V. Chvertko, chairman of the KGB in the Kirghiz Republic, in *Sovetskaia Kirghizia,* January 9, 1962.

[15] *Izvestia,* February 24, 1962.

[16] *Pravda Ukrainy,* June 6, 1962.

[17] *Sovetskaia Moldavia,* June 19, 1962.

[18] *Turkmenskaia iskra,* April 25, 1962.

[19] *Pravda,* April 5, 1962.

[20] See fn. 14.

[21] *Partinaia zhizn,* No. 9, 1962.

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But what complicates the struggle against economic crime above all else is the fact that, in Soviet conditions, many of the crooks, bribe-takers, and speculators perform useful services for otherwise honest citizens, who in consequence become their accomplices. How often, for instance, does an industrial or agricultural manager, finding the completion of his production plan endangered by the dilatoriness and inflexibility of the legal supply agencies, resort to bribery or call in some shady middleman who, for a price, will provide urgently needed materials, with no questions asked? How often do enterprises with little faith in the regular supply channels arrange informal (and illegal) barter transactions among themselves? How few managers there must be who have never, in the slightest particular, broken the law by "padding" their reports to higher authority. The managers who succumb to such temptations may have no criminal intent, but their implication in illegal activities may incline them to connive at and hush up the misdeeds of others motivated by greed.

It is, moreover, a very short step from well-meaning breaches of regulations to deliberate crimes against the state. When the "Rossia" *kolkhoz* in Moldavia began employing illegal middlemen to transport its products to the Far North where they commanded very high prices, its managers may have been concerned mainly with their responsibility for building up the farm's capital (and the consumers in the north may have obtained goods otherwise unavailable). But, as so often happens in the Soviet Union, well-intentioned violation of the law developed into full-fledged crime. The *kolkhoz* managers eventually started buying up produce from other farms for speculative sale and, to conceal their operations, withheld large sums of money from the State Bank.[22]

Objectives of the Regime

In conclusion, then, it seems likely that the Soviet government, in introducing the death penalty for certain categories of economic crime, had two interconnected motives: to deter criminals who, under the threat of any lesser penalty, found the risk of detection well worth taking; and to frighten the many more who have been guilty, in one way or another, of breaches of economic discipline that encourage crime and reduce the effective control of the state over the economy. By the action taken under the new laws, an example has been made of a sizable number of particularly vulnerable economic offenders, but the lesson is surely also addressed to a much wider circle.

It is noteworthy that most of those executed so far for economic offenses have been persons of relatively slight importance who could be destroyed without embarrassment to the regime. Yet it would be strange indeed if all those actually guilty of such crimes were exclusively petty officials or people without regular occupation. One aspect of the reported cases that has attracted attention abroad is the large number of Jews among the condemned. It is, of course, true that the state trading organizations employ many Jews, and it is not intrinsically improbable that Jews may be prominent in money-changing activities, particularly in the Baltic areas where they could legally carry on this business before Soviet annexation. But at the same time it is quite evident, both from the length of the press accounts of cases involving Jews and from the language employed, that Soviet editors are particularly disposed to dwell on crimes of people whom the public is only too ready to regard as "alien." Phrases such as "the tribe of underground currency speculators" (*Sovetskaia Belorussia,* March 17, 1962) and "people who have sold themselves to the golden calf" (*Sovetskaia Estonia,* March 25, 1962) are certainly anti-semitic in effect, and presumably also in intent.

There is, in sum, a characteristic duality in the policies of the Soviet regime on the elimination of economic crime. On the one hand, more active public "control"—in the Russian sense of the term—of officialdom and of enterprises is to be encouraged. (It has been authoritatively suggested that *Rabkrin* should be resurrected to organize this supervision, but the great difficulty here is that the public "controllers" themselves would be controlled, actually, by the very same party organizations which control the bureaucracy and the economic managers.) On the other hand, the party is prepared to resort to extreme punitive measures. Not only the wider application of capital punishment, but also the increasing activity of the KGB in the investigation of peculation and bribery, must fill many Soviet citizens with justifiable fear that Khrushchevian "normality" is after all precarious.

[22] *Sovetskaia Moldavia,* February 2, 1961.

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The "Cold War" on the Literary Front

Part II: Groups, Trends, Genres

By David Burg

EDITORS' NOTE: This is the second of a three-part article on the current literary scene in the USSR. In the first, which appeared in the July-August issue, the author dealt primarily with "underground" literature—novels, poems, and essays written anonymously, circulated anonymously within the Soviet Union, and often smuggled out and published abroad. In the second part, Mr. Burg describes the various trends that have sprung up in Soviet literature in the past few years, and analyzes the nuances between various groups of like-minded authors, thus showing that the current literary ferment cannot be viewed simply in terms of one group of writers (conservatives or neo-Stalinists) versus another (liberals). The concluding section, to be published in the forthcoming issue, will focus on the struggle between the various schools and the role that the party plays in it. For background interest, the reader is referred to the biographical listing of Russian authors given on pp. 13-14 of the July-August 1962 issue.

BARELY EIGHT MONTHS after Stalin's death, V. Pomerantsev, till then an almost unknown critic, published in the magazine *Novyi mir* (New World) an article which overnight catapulted him to fame:

Sincerity—that is what is lacking in some books and plays . . . Writers not only can but must cast off all devices, tricks and methods for avoiding contradictory and difficult questions. . . . It is necessary to write books about man. . . . Genuine conflict must be introduced into novels. . . . Enrichment of subjects seems to me the most acute need of our literature. . . . and in a year or two you [the readers] will get genuine art.[1]

Pomerantsev's article was denounced in *Pravda* as "contradicting party instructions in the field of belles-lettres,"[2] and shortly thereafter A. Tvardovsky, editor of *Novyi mir*, was fired.

In 1953 Pomerantsev's predictions seemed to fly in the face of reality. How could one predict the flowering of "genuine art" at a time when art had in part ceased to exist and in part disappeared underground, when the most venerable authors were condemned to silence, when literary hacks were busy exposing "cosmopolitans" within the country and "warmongering haberdashers" beyond its frontiers? What kind of sincerity could be expected in a land where so much energy was expended on the composition of paeans to the Leader and on doggerels about the happy lives of thankful "ordinary Soviet men and women."

Against such a background Pomerantsev's optimism seemed naively absurd. Yet, his words were prophetic. To be sure, his ideal of a "genuine art" has not been achieved—without radical political changes in the Soviet system, it is unattainable—but during the past nine years literary production in the USSR (as distinguished from official literary theory) has indeed been moving in

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[1] V. Pomerantsev, "Ob iskrennosti v literature" (On Sincerity in Literature), *Novyi mir*, No. 12, 1953, pp. 218-245.

[2] A. Surkov, "Pod znamenem sotsialisticheskovo realisma" (Under the Banner of Socialist Realism), *Pravda*, May 25, 1954.

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the direction of humanism, sincerity, and an honest approach to "difficult questions."

This trend is reflected in the controversies between the diverse literary groups which one Soviet writer earlier this year defined as the "cold war on the intra-literary front." [3] At first glance, this "cold war," which is conducted more or less in the open, appears to consist of efforts by liberals of various hues to move in the direction indicated by Pomerantsev. In reality, however, things are much more complicated. The "leftists" (or liberals) do not struggle against the "rightists" (conservatives) [4] in the abstract; rather, they strive to be writers, each in his own way. In the course of this effort there have emerged in recent years several groupings within the liberal camp, and similarly, new faces and combinations have also come to the fore among the conservatives. It is the purpose of the present article to report on these new developments and to draw whatever tentative conclusions distance and the rapidly shifting scene permit. The emphasis will be on the literary scene rather than on literary production; for we are interested here primarily in the general ideas and esthetic views which link writers together or separate them, rather than in their individual accomplishments as such.

During Stalin's rule "cliquishness" was one of the most terrible accusations that could be leveled against a writer. In 1948-49, for instance, it came down like an avalanche on the so-called "comopolitan" critics.[5] The "cosmopolitans" "confessed" under pressure that they were indeed a unit, an amalgamation,[6] and this confession then became the main weapon against them.

In the orthodox Soviet view, "cliquishness" is the creation of literary groups whose members are joined by personal relations and common interests not shared by the party-controlled Union of Writers as a whole. The party knows that it cannot reliably control such separate groups, and it has therefore always insisted on the "unity of the writers' collective." Its position in this respect remains unchanged today,[7] only now, after the termination of mass terror, the leadership no longer has the absolute control over human behavior which the threat of death once provided. Thus, what in 1948 was an inexorable law, has in recent years evolved into an unpleasant rule which must be taken into account, but which nonetheless can be circumvented.

To be sure, the writers are still subjected to pressure, and they incessantly keep promising to "consolidate." In fact, however, there now exist within the confines of the Writers' Union several literary groups, each united by personal relations and esthetic consensus, and often quarreling savagely among themselves. Like many other progressive phenomena in Soviet life, these groups are officially unrecognized, but under present Soviet conditions the party is compelled to confine itself to only limited interference in their activities—censoring, guiding, restraining, and generally reminding the writers that they are not in France.

The Socio-Critical Trend

Of the prevailing literary trends the best known and probably the most popular may be fairly exactly defined as "socio-critical." It was initiated soon after Stalin's death in *Novyi mir,* which remains to this day its chief organ. Most of the writings in this genre—from the article by Pomerantsev, through Dudintsev's novel *Not By Bread Alone* [8] and the recent short stories by V. Nekrasov ("Kira Georghievna") [9] and Yu. Bondarev ("Tishina" [Quietude]) [10] to the memoirs of I. Ehrenburg [11]—first appeared in that magazine. This does not mean, however, that *Novyi mir* has a monopoly on social criticism. An important role, for instance, has been played by the magazine *Teatr,* (Theater) which as early as 1954 spoke about the transformation of professional revolutionaries into commonplace bureaucrats, about the mass terror and political provocations.[12] And perhaps the brightest and most consistent specimens of social criticism appeared in the "revisionist" *Literaturnaia Moskva* (Literary Moscow) which for a few stormy months in 1956 turned into the organizational center

[3] N. Gribachev, "Stikhi, rozy i rozgi" (Verses, Roses and Birch Rods), *Literaturnaia gazeta,* March 27, 1962.

[4] By "liberals," in conformity with unofficial yet widespread and apt terminology accepted in the USSR, I mean the advocates of more or less radical changes in the social system; by "conservatives" I mean the orthodox Communists. The terms "leftist" and "rightist" have parallel meanings.

[5] "Ob odnoi antipartiinoi gruppe teatralnykh kritikov" (On a Certain Anti-party Group of Drama Critics), *Pravda,* January 28, 1949.

[6] "Za patrioticheskuiu sovetskuiu dramaturgiiu" (For Patriotic Soviet Playwriting), *Literaturnaia gazeta,* February 26, 1949.

[7] See for example, "Derzanie i mudrost" (Daring and Wisdom), *Literaturnaia gazeta,* July 19, 1962.

[8] *Ne khlebom yedinym, Novyi mir,* Nos. 8-10, 1956. American edition published by E. P. Dutton, New York, 1957.

[9] *Novyi mir,* No. 6, 1961. American edition, Pantheon Books, New York, 1961.

[10] *Novyi mir,* Nos. 3-5, 1962.

[11] I. Ehrenburg, *Liudi, gody, zhizn* (People, Years, Life), *Novyi mir,* No. 8, 1960—No. 6, 1962. English edition: *People and Life,* McGibbon, London, 1961.

[12] L. Zorin, "Gosti," *Teatr,* No. 82, 1954.

[13] See A. Yashin, "Rychagi" (The Levers); N. Zhdanov, "Poezdka na rodinu" (Journey to the Homeland); and other short stories in *Literaturnaia Moskva,* Vol. 2, 1956.

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of the literary opposition.[13] By May 1957, however, its rebellious spirit was utterly crushed, and it remained for the more cautious editorial office of *Novyi mir*—located by symbolical chance on the corner of Pushkin Square and Chekhov Street—to continue the fight.

Novyi mir, like all the other big Soviet literary magazines, is an organ of the Union of Soviet Writers. That it has succeeded, despite often strong pressures, in avoiding permanent defeat and capitulation, is not due to any privileged status, but to the high connections, the diplomatic flair and the gift for political maneuvering of its editors-in-chief: A. Tvardovsky (1950-54 and 1958 to the present) and K. Simonov (1954-58). These qualities, coupled with the instinctive feeling for the boundaries of the possible and the courage of the entire editorial staff, have proved the salvation of the magazine. When the party attacks it, *Novyi mir* does not engage in a "conspiracy of silence" as the editors of *Literaturnaia Moskva* have done, but publicly confesses its errors [14] in order to repeat them again a few months later as though nothing had happened. It takes an active part in the anti-Western and anti-bourgeois campaign,[15] and supports certain neo-Stalinist measures of internal policy such as the current fight against "parasitism." [16] It has even served the party in such contemptible matters as the persecution of Pasternak, supplying arguments against *Doctor Zhivago,* which its editorial board was the first to reject.[17] But a few years pass, passions subside, and *Novyi mir* now is the first to come forward publicly in favor of the literary rehabilitation of the same Pasternak, though—observing the "limits of the possible"—only as a poet.[18] The justification of these tactics of *Novyi mir* is the defense of the "socio-critical" trend in literature. That it is necessary to resort to them is in itself an indictment of the Soviet system.

THE LEITMOTIV of the "socio-critical" movement is "human destiny and national destiny," to use the words of Belinsky. The social relations of people, their attitude toward creative work, the influence of the social on the personal and of the personal on the social, man and history—these are the basic themes of the regenerated "critical realists." The typical approach shows how in the society created by Stalin people threatened by death or total social degradation deviated from "the norms of the good," how personal tragedy often sprang from distorted social relations.

Thus in the story "Rychagi" (The Levers), by A. Yashin, ordinary people who are naturally inclined to be just turn into merciless levers of the bureaucratic machine when they join together at a party meeting. With mechanical cruelty, prodded by fear for their positions if they contradicted directives from above, they adopt a decision which condemns to poverty their neighbors in the village and which is directly contrary to what they consider right. They hope that the time will come when they will no longer feel obliged to do what they know to be unjust, but it never occurs to them that they could bring the change about or that in their official capacity they could have acted differently. Yashin's story was published in 1956. Since then dozens of similar stories, novels, essays, and poems have appeared, portraying the conflict between man's good instincts and common sense and the evil nonsense to which he is driven as a blindly obedient bureaucrat.[19]

Another staple of the critical realists is the collision between Soviet officialdom and the creative personality. In *The Thaw* by Ehrenburg, the artist who conforms to the demands of "socialist realism" and prostitutes his talent is "successful"; the one who paints freely lives as a social outcast and close to starvation. Dudintsev and Granin [20] registered the hostility of the bureaucracy toward creative work in the technical field; the first with faith in the victory of the creative principle, the second viewing the contest with despair. The internal bankruptcy and the tragedy of the artists who adapted themselves to Stalinism are the subject of "Kira Georgievna," the story by V. Nekrasov mentioned earlier. But unlike Granin's and Ehrenburg's characters, Kira, the woman sculptor, and her husband adapted themselves not outwardly and cynically but inwardly and sincerely. For many years they refused to face the fact that their instinct of self-preservation and their attempt to escape the "complications of life" were the true motives for their conversion to "socialist realism." When ultimately they are compelled by implacable events to look the truth in the eye, Kira at 40 begins an agonizing self-

[13] See, "Za vysokuiu ideinost nashei literatury" (For High Ideological Content in Our Literature), *Literaturnaia gazeta,* Aug. 17, 1954, and speech of K. Fedin, *Pravda,* June 12, 1957.

[14] For recent examples see, B. Kerbabaev, "Ukhuru—znachit svoboda" (Ukhuru Means Freedom), *Novyi mir,* No. 5, 1962, or D. Granin, "Ostrov molodykh" (Island of the Young), *Novyi mir,* No. 6, 1962.

[16] *E.g.,* Ye. Rzhevskaia, "Zemnoe pritiazhenie (The Earth's Gravitation), *Novyi mir,* No. 6, 1962.

[17] See the letter from the editorial board of *Novyi mir* to B. Pasternak, appearing in *Literaturnaia gazeta,* October 25, 1958.

[18] See I. Ehrenburg, *op. cit., Novyi mir,* No. 2, 1961, pp. 87-92.

[19] See, *e.g.,* Ye. Dorosh, "Sukhoe leto" (The Dry Summer), *Novyi mir,* No. 7, 1961.

[20] D. Granin, "Sobstvennoe mnenie," (One's Own Opinion) *Novyi mir,* No. 10, 1956.

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reevaluation and her 60-year-old husband comes to the despondent conclusion that life has been lived in vain.

The mutilation of human life and human relations by the hostile course of history is yet another basic theme of the "critical realists." In Nekrasov's works this idea is developed on two planes: on the one hand, there is the internal crisis of men outwardly unscathed, and on the other, the crushed life of those who landed directly under the wheels of the terror's machine. In V. Kaverin's novel *Poisky i nadezhdy* (Searches and Hopes),[21] the heroine loses her faith in justice on earth when her husband is arrested. In *"Snova avgust"* (August Again),[22] a long short story by N. Ivanter, the son turns away from his father upon discovering that the latter had denounced his best friend during the "great purge." Finally, in one of the latest and boldest works about the terror—Bondarev's novelette "Quietude"—the life of a young war hero is ruined by the arrest of his father, an old Communist, on the absurd charge of Trotskyism. Here, too, for the first time perhaps in Soviet literature, we find a detailed description of a post-war arrest imbued with a rabid and open hatred for the secret police.[23] Heretofore arrests were generally simply mentioned.

Form in Critical Realism

The reduction of men to levers, the suppression of talents and of individual moral judgment, terror and the demoralization that it breeds—and one might add, the impoverishment of the village as a result of collectivization [24]—are then the central themes of the new Soviet literature of social criticism. One may ask why writers in the USSR should be so sensitive to these problems. Are not personal misfortunes justified by that great ultimate aim—communism?

The question may be answered as follows: First, Marxist ideology itself, even in its Leninist form, does not envisage the bureaucratization of man as a means of achieving its ultimate goal. Facts of life which are at variance with ideological commitment provoke criticism and resentment. Secondly, the Soviet people are widely conscious of the iniquity of the existing order of things and they are increasingly reluctant to continue sacrificing all human values for the sake of promised future triumphs. This feeling was well expressed in a recent Soviet play:

I am not a microbe but a man. Let me draw a free breath. Let my conscience be my controller. I have ceased to be afraid to tell the truth. . . . I am sick of being a bridge between the old and the new world. I no longer want to go around with a sore and bloody back. Let me rest. . . . I am tired of struggling . . . struggling in science . . . struggling for bread . . . struggling for atomic energy . . . struggling for the development of virgin land. Even for a quiet rest it is necessary to struggle. That's enough struggle for me! Give me a chance just to live as a human being! [25]

Still another source of inspiration for the contemporary "critical" trend in Soviet literature is the Russian radical enlightenment. Its protagonists agree with representatives of official esthetic theory in that they regard literature as mainly educational in purpose. What they differ on are the aims of education. The party ideologists stress the "selfless" building of communism, without giving much thought to the means by which this is to be achieved. The "critical realists," on the other hand—even while accepting the common slogan of "building communism"—emphasize humanism, the dignity and value of every human being, and an organization of society which would more or less conform to these ideals.

It is true that in their struggle against the primitive sketchiness of the party conservatives, the "critical realists" put special stress on "literary craftsmanship," [26] but primarily because craftsmanship is necessary to make art didactically effective.[27] This same consideration makes them traditionalist in artistic forms. Esthetic vanguardism creates difficulties in communication and provokes antagonism in the masses; it is therefore of little use in educating the public. Therefore the purpose of good craftsmanship is primarily the near-perfect imitation of the familiar classics, rather than the pursuit of new modes of artistic expression.

Thus in "socio-critical" fiction the favorite form is traditional psychological analysis of "soul education" under the influence of external "circumstances"; in the standard Russian pattern, descriptions of the inner space of the characters alternate with drama-like renditions of action. Everything is naturalistic, all proportions and relations "as in real life." (These neo-naturalists seem not to have heard about "fantastic realism" or "lyric

[21] *Literaturnaia Moskva*, Vol. 2, Moscow, 1956.

[22] N. Ivanter, "Snova avgust," *Novyi mir*, Nos. 8-9, 1959.

[23] Yu. Bondarev, *loc. cit.*, pp. 129-135.

[24] A frank description of the harm done to agriculture by bureaucratization of the rural areas can be found in Ye. Dorosh, *Sukhoe leto* (Dry Summer), *Novyi mir*, No. 10, 1956.

[25] G. Mdivani, "Trevozhnie dni" (Ominous Days), *Teatr*, No. 12, 1958.

[26] See a typical policy statement by the editorial board of *Novyi mir* in *Pravda*, May 20, 1962.

[27] Of course, there are exceptions. I. Ehrenburg, for example generally belongs to the "critical realists" in his work of recent years, but views art more broadly than they, and supports avant-garde poets.

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prose," about Kafka or Proust—even though much of this literary heritage is now being enthusiastically discovered by the younger Soviet writers.)

"Kira Georgievna" is a typical story in the neo-naturalistic genre, formally restrained and patterned after a situation well known in Soviet literature: the superficially happy life of the heroine is interrupted by a man who has grown wise through the experience of work and deprivation; under his influence, the once carefree heroine becomes filled with a sense of responsibility to herself and to mankind. But if Nekrasov's story is conventional, his treatment is not. "The man who has grown wise" brings with him the experience not of a builder of communism, as one would expect in orthodox Soviet fiction, but of 20 years innocently spent behind barbed wire. The transgressions of the sculptress Kira are not of the officially fashionable kind, like parasitism or acquisitiveness; they are mindless conformity with officially prescribed values in life and art. Nekrasov, similarly to other "critical realists," has sought to convey new ideas by investing a commonplace literary scheme with unexpected content.

Until recently, the ill will shown by the social critics toward artistic experimentation has taken largely passive forms. *Novyi mir,* for instance, simply would not publish anything written in an avant-gardist style, even though it defended in its pages the right to esthetic innovation. But on the occasion of the 125th anniversary of Pushkin's death, Editor Tvardovsky came out against the experimental poetry and prose of young writers, and for the first time publicly called upon them to "learn from Pushkin." The speech may have been partly an attempt to win the sympathies of high party officials and consolidate the position of *Novyi mir,* but undoubtedly, it reflected also Tvardovsky's true convictions and the traditionalist esthetic viewpoint of the "socio-critical" trend.

The Avant-Garde

In the first installment of this study, it was pointed out that a proportion of avant-garde literature still remains underground. This is particularly true of the work of young authors. One Soviet poetess writes that such works appear "slowly and in small quantities, and are published as 'carefully' as though some potent drug were being measured into a cup with a dropper." [28] The avant-garde has no literary outlet of its own on the order of *Novyi mir,* reflecting the simple fact that experimental writing is far more unacceptable to the party leadership than "critical realism." It is no accident that within the last eighteen months two publications which had cautiously supported experimental writers, *Oktiabr* and *Yunost,* have been handed over to the conservatives —the former after the death of its editor-in-chief, and the latter after its chief was in effect forced to resign for publishing two pieces that particularly offended the orthodox bureaucrats. Up to 1960 *Komsomolskaia pravda* on occasion published avant-garde works, but it does so no longer. The main literary outlets that are still partly open to the modernists are the moderately liberal monthly *Znamia* and the newspaper *Literaturnaia gazeta* which within limits tends to support any writers who are "anti-conservative". Once in a while various publishing houses also put out individual books or anthologies of an avant-garde coloring.

Who are the modernists whose works do appear in print? The poets span several generations. Among the fairly young, the best known and most popular are, of course, Ye. Yevtushenko and A. Voznesensky; others are V. Tsybin, B. Okudjava, and I. Kharabarov. Poets of intermediate age include B. Slutsky and E. Vinokurov, while in the oldest group there are S. Kirsanov and L. Martynov. The best known prose writers of this modern movement are mostly young people: V. Aksenov, A. Kuznetsov, A. Gladilin and others. (It is worth noting incidentally that many of the notorious literary rebels of thirty and forty years ago, such as the constructivist I. Selvinsky and the futurist N. Aseyev, have long since been tamed into insipidity.)

Each of the modernists named above is a writer of distinctive individuality. Four lines of poetry are enough to tell Yevtushenko from Voznesensky, and in a few paragraphs one can recognize Aksenov or Gladilin. On what basis, then, are they grouped together here?

Above all, what they share in common is the esthetic quest—"the spark of searching, the spark of risk, the spark of Olympian daring," [29] in the words of Voznesensky. By contrast, even the more talented poets with roots in the Stalin era (e.g., Simonov and Tvardovsky) are dull imitators of the 19th-century poetic tradition. The characteristic features of their verse are rigid rhythms sustained for hundreds of lines on end, elementary rhymes, disregard for the sound pattern of word combinations. These characteristics are noticeable even when works are spiced with fresh imagery.

Today's avant-garde writers strive instead to continue the modernistic traditions that evolved during the years

[28] M. Borisova, "Poisk i gipsovie sloniki" (The Search and the Little Clay Elephants) *Literaturnaia gazeta,* July 28, 1962.

[29] A. Voznesensky, "B.A.." *Mozaika* (Mosaic), Vladimir, 1960, p. 24.

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immediately preceding and following the Revolution. The new poets are above all, acutely aware of the very substance of verse—original rhythm, rhyme, and the association of sound and meaning through alliteration and assonance. Yevtushenko, for instance, has introduced into Russian poetry his own peculiarly "Yevtushenkian" rhythm based on free-flowing meter, his own style of brilliantly inexact dactylic rhymes. He was the first of the young poets to scorn accusations of "formalism" and to use strikingly garish sound combinations which impart a special kind of full-bodied flavor to his verse. Yet as far as imagery and grammar are concerned he remains a "realist," shunning similes and constructions which would transcend the limits of prosaic "common sense."

Voznesensky, a friend and initially a protégé of Yevtushenko's is a poet of an entirely different type. Being more bookish and more clearly conscious of his particular literary forebears, Voznesensky perpetuates (probably consciously) one specific trend in Russian poetry—the school of futurism, represented by Khlebnikov and Mayakovsky, Tsvetayeva, and Pasternak. But within the framework of this movement, Voznesensky is no mere imitator; he is a creator, as unlike any other as Tsvetayeva is unlike Mayakovsky. His chief preoccupation is maximum dynamic expressiveness. Everything in his verse is subordinated to this end—the frequent unexpected changes of his rhythm, the daring intensity of his imagery, which often surprises "common sense" but is strikingly precise and profound poetically. (One of his most-quoted passages is: "And the Century roars mightily—/a cross between ape/and jet engine.")[30] In search of expressiveness Voznesensky does not hesitate to "shock the party functionary." In his "Ballada raboty" (Ballad of Work) he has the "belly" of Rubens "dangling like a furry turnip," and in "Poslednaia elektrika" (The Last Streetcar) a prostitute, suddenly gripped by the force of art, "whispers obscenely the purest of words." Of all the Soviet avant-garde writers who have managed to penetrate into published literature, Voznesensky is probably the most "leftist" in his esthetics, although there are, of course, many underground poets who are much more extreme.

If Yevtushenko and Voznesensky are the avant-garde's typical representatives in poetry, their counterparts in prose are V. Aksenov and A. Gladilin, who are, however, neither as talented nor as original as the poets. Soviet critics have repeatedly noted that these writers look for their models in the West. For example, Aksenov in his "Zviozdny bilet" (Ticket to the Stars)[31] seems to imitate Salinger in striving to render the speech of adolescents as realistically as possible. The world in this novel appears as seen through the eyes of its various characters. Even the theme of "Zviozdny bilet" is Salinger-like: the revolt of the Holden Canfields of Moscow against adults and the life imposed by them upon adolescents. Both Aksenov and Gladilin avoid the technique so common in classical Russian and Soviet literature—the description by an author of background, of characters' physical appearance, of inner emotions. Only rarely do they introduce philosophical and lyrical digressions in their own voices. Their basic techniques are rather dialogue and action, or at most discourses by the characters themselves. In his novelette *Dym v glaza* (Smoke in the Eyes) Gladilin also introduces stylized passages from newspapers and documents, in obvious imitation of Dos Passos.[32]

On the whole, avant-garde prose seems to be following the call sounded forty years ago by perhaps the most talented Russian critic of the last fifty years, Lev Kuntz: "Learn from the West." Absorbed from Russian translations of Hemingway, Dos Passos, and lately Salinger, the characteristics of this trend are dynamism, compactness, terseness. To a lesser extent these qualities are nourished by memories of the two short but highly charged decades from 1910 to 1930, when a number of Russian writers (e.g., Bely, Remizov, Pilnyak, Zamyatin) tried to shake off the burden of ossified "realistic" traditions. But these memories have somewhat paled as many of the writers mentioned have been out of print for some thirty years and others have been outlawed altogether.

In Search of the Self

If the prose writers seem somewhat less original than the poets, all the modernists nonetheless join together in exalting individual personality in their creative effort. Indeed, the entire esthetics of modernism is based upon the unspoken premise that an individual perception of reality—as distinguished from a conformist perception, whether it be "official" or "oppositionist"—is of value and interest. This is not to say that social criticism is totally ignored by the modernists. The famous long poem "Seven Days of the Week" by S. Kirsanov,[33] for instance, is a variation on the theme of "The Levers." In Yevtushenko's "Stantsia Zima" (Station Zima)[34] one finds references to a life broken by totalitarianism,

[30] A. Voznesensky, "Khudozhnik," (The Artist), *Ibid.*, p. 29.
[31] *Yunost*, Nos. 6-7, 1961.
[32] A. Gladilin, *Idushchii vperiod* (He who goes Forward). Collection. Moscow, 1962.
[33] "Sem dnei nedeli," *Novyi mir*, No. 9, 1956.
[34] *Oktiabr*, No. 10, 1956.

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hints of terrorism, and descriptions of poverty in the village. As a rule, however, social criticism turns up in avant-garde works only to the extent that it serves the authors' basic purpose—the exploration of new-found individuality in all of its protean forms. In contrast to the official stress on monolithic unity, Yevtushenko affirms: "I am diverse/I am hard-working and idle./ I am purposeful—and unpurposeful." [35] In "Station Zima," Yevtushenko's first major success, episodes outwardly suggestive of social criticism are really stages of the hero's understanding of himself, stages of his reassessment of the values which had been instilled in him through education and propaganda.

In a poem with the characteristic title "Kto ty?" (Who Are You?), Voznesensky asks: "Who are we, gambling chips or great beings?" [36] This emphasis on self-determination of the individual in the world about him is probably the major leitmotiv of Voznesensky's writing. In fact, his fame began, not accidentally, with his assertion of the individual's duty to be independent in life and work, in spite of the "madness of money" and the "crap of the academies" ("Parabolicheskaia ballada" [Parabolic Ballad]). Even in visiting the far-off and exotic land of the United States, the poet is above all concerned with how his experience will help him toward self-revelation:

Open up, America!
Eureka!
I measure, pry, I discover, panting,
In America—America,
In myself—myself.[37]

With no less subjective intensity, B. Slutsky concerns himself in his poem "Stariki" (Old Men), with the meaning of life in the face of inevitable aging.[38] The crucial personal emphasis of the avant-garde has been summed up by one of its initiators, V. Tsybin, as follows: "In this poetry 'I' is equal to 'we,' or one might even say that 'I' can be more than 'we.' "[39] Tsybin could have been less cautious, for the "I" is manifestly more than the "we" both in poetry and in prose.

Consequently, the avant-garde directs its protest primarily against anything that stands in the way of individual freedom and self-expression, from the physical limits of national boundaries to the mentally crippling effects of hypocrisy. Indeed, hypocrisy and insincerity loom large in the modernists' works as possibly the major obstacles that prevent people from being themselves and living according to their true individual natures. In one of Yevtushenko's poems [40] practically all human relationships except love turn out to be branded with falsehood. More common than this "existentialist" approach, however, is the outcry against social hypocrisy, which has provoked increasing protest despite a traditional taboo on the subject. It is in the struggle against social hypocrisy that the characters of V. Aksenov's "Ticket to the Stars" express and assert themselves; and they see it literally everywhere, from discourses on "morals" to the blaringly optimistic style of official speeches and music. Derision of this style as an attempt to conceal ugly truths behind the facade of lofty words is a constant theme of Aksenov's work. In *Kollegi* (The Colleagues), another of his short novels, a character directly links hypocrisy with the most revolting features of Stalinism:

I'm so sick of all this All this grandiloquence, all these lofty utterances! They are heard from scores of splendid idealists, but from thousands of scoundrels too. Beria probably used them when he was deceiving the party. Now that a lot has become clear to us, these words have turned into trash. I am responsible to my conscience alone, not to some verbal idols. All they do is interfere with my seeing life as it really is. . . .[41]

It is natural that this uncompromising revolt against insincerity should sometimes, in individual passages or poems by Aksenov, Yevtushenko and Gladilin, imply skepticism akin to that of underground literature (discussed in Part I of this article). Such overtones have met with a sharp reaction in official criticism, ranging from concern to reprimand.[42] As a rule, however, the modernists who appear in print cannot be called ideological skeptics. They do not challenge Communist doctrine, but rather speak up against the hypocritical *misuse* of ideology—by a symbolic "Beria"—while representing themselves as defenders of its true meaning. "Comrades, words must be given back their primordial ring," [43] exclaims Yevtushenko. At the same time, whether naively or with naive cunning, they often interpret the "primordial ring" in such a way as to suggest the complete opposite of historically traditional inter-

[35] Ye. Yevtushenko, "Prolog" (Prologue). In the collection *Shosse entuziastov* (Highway of Enthusiasts), Moscow, 1958.

[36] A. Voznesensky, "Kto ty?" (Who Are You?), *ibid.*, p. 41.

[37] A. Voznesensky, "Thirty interjections from the poem "Treugolnaia grusha" (Three-Cornered Pear), *Znamia,* No. 4, 1962.

[38] B. Slutsky, "Stariki" (Old Men), in the collection *Tarusskie stranitsy* (Tarusa Pages) Kaluga, 1961.

[39] "V dorogu dalniuiu," (The Long Road Ahead), *Literaturnaia gazeta,* July 6, 1961.

[40] "Vernost" (Loyalty), in the collection *Vzmakh ruki* (A Wave of the Hand), Moscow, 1962.

[41] *Yunost,* Nos. 6-7, 1960.

[42] *E.g.,* L. Ilyichev, *Kommunist,* No. 1, 1962, p. 36.

[43] "Prazdnuite pervoe maia!" (Happy May Day!), *Vzmakh ruki, op. cit.*

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pretations, if not of the ideology itself. Voznesensky, for example, says: "Communism is above all the flowering of the individual." [44] Nor can the avant-gardists be called skeptics in the broader sense unrelated to ideology. On the contrary, their aspirations are quite positive: self-assertion, self-revelation, self-exploration.

The modernists remain preoccupied with the individual even when they are talking about subjects of great *Bud zdorov, shkoliar (Greetings, Schoolboy)* [45] World social scope. For example, in B. Okudzhava's novelette War II is revealed only as seen through the eyes of a recent schoolboy turned soldier. It is not the war itself but the boy's fear of death in its various manifestations, his constant self-analysis, and his attitude toward women under wartime pressures that interest Okudzhava. Characteristically the writer is much less interested in the attitude of women toward his hero. On the whole, the relationships *between* people, including sex, are subordinated in the modernists' writings to their main theme —the determination of the individual self.

The Genre School

There are, however, two other trends in contemporary Russian literature in which the basic theme is precisely one of personal relations between people. One of these trends could be described as lyrical, the other as a literature of manners (*bytovaya*). For both, intimate personal relationships are of chief concern, but the two schools approach the theme from different angles.

The genre or manners school is close to that of social criticism. It is represented primarily by the playwrights N. Pogodin, V. Rozov, G. Arbuzov, S. Aleshin and others. Their publication is the magazine *Teatr,* and their plays characteristically revolve around personal relations, seen against the background of social relations and of varied everyday environment. Most of these dramas are variations on male-female conflicts, triangles, quadrangles, or family problems of the Soviet bourgeoisie. Compared to the "industrialist" plays of the Stalinist type, they are much more human as well as much more popular with Soviet audiences. Die-hard critics still attack them for "petty-theming," since anything personal is regarded as trivial compared to the building of communism. Nevertheless genre dramas are produced extensively—in no small part because most Soviet theatres operate on a commercial basis and want to assure themselves of "a full house."

In its techniques, its approach, and its interpretation of life, the genre movement continues the tradition of the "bourgeois" drama of manners. This imitative tendency contributes to its popularity, particularly among the middle and older generations of the intelligentsia with average education. The genre playwrights rarely delve very deeply in analyzing human relationships, but they go deep enough to annoy the conservatives. One of the fundamental themes of this neo-naturalistic drama is the assertion of the right to love, even in situations that break up families, and the denial of the party's right to interfere with such attachments. This, for example, is the central theme of N. Pogodin's *Sonet Petrarki* (Sonnet of Petrarch).[46] Considering the fact that "breaking up a family" is still sufficient cause for expulsion from the Komsomol and the party, Pogodin's play has overtones of social criticism. Yet it is first and foremost a "drama of manners" in the traditional sense. The play traces the development of a relationship between a middle-aged married engineer and a young laboratory technician in an atmosphere of envy and perennial small-town gossip. The important change from the 19th-century plot is that such "illicit love" is persecuted not by the Church or by "public opinion," which at least could be escaped by going to another town, but by the party committee, from which there is no escape. Pogodin, along with the other authors of the genre school, tirelessly affirms his loyalty to the party but actually wants to limit the party's rights, to preserve a special realm of private personal life where a human being is his own master. "I give all my soul to the party; I'd give it my life. But there are private sides to a man's life which he cannot reveal to anybody," says the hero of *Sonnet of Petrarch.*[47]

Pogodin's play is more interesting than most works of the genre school. The bulk of them are rather superficial variations of the same old love story, differing mainly in geographic or social setting: a Siberian construction site (*Irkutskaia istoriia* [Irkutsk Story] by G. Arbuzov), an industrial setting (*Odna* [Alone], by S. Aleshin), a school graduation (*V poiskakh radosti* [In Search of Joy], by V. Rozov). Yet in contrast to Stalinist times, these works at least emphasize the complexity of human emotions and the important role they play in human existence. Sometimes the tensions described produce near-tragic situations, but they never reach the point of real tragedy. And final victory in the love contest goes not to the "villain" who refuses, for example, to do service in the virgin lands, but to the standard-bearer of "positive" Soviet values, whose personal

[44] "My-mai" (We Are May), *Literaturnaia gazeta,* May 1, 1962.

[45] In the collection *Tarusskiie stranitsy, op. cit.*

[46] *Literaturnaia Moskva,* Vol. 2, 1956.

[47] *Ibid.,* p. 325.

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will finally becomes merged with the will of the party, though not without inner struggle.

V. Rozov is representative of the dramatists who repetitiously adhere to this plot pattern. Yet one of his recent works, the screen play *A, B, V, G, D, . . .* (A,B,C, . . .),[48] ventured along a more original course and has become, together with Aksenov's "Ticket to the Stars," the center of a literary *cause célèbre.* In the initial version of Rozov's scenario the love story receded somewhat into the background, giving way to the description of a Soviet youth's spiritual search to discover his own independent place in the world. Thus, the play came close—if only in theme—to some of the avant-garde literary works. Rozov even allowed his main character, Volodya, to state very directly and persuasively the kind of skepticism that for the most part is limited to underground literature:

People invent color television, tape recorders; they are on the brink of discovering the mystery of the origin of life, of flying to the moon, but for all that they are not getting any more honest or happy. . . . Maybe the thing to do is to blow this whole world to hell! To wipe out everybody in one sweep! Let everything begin all over, with the amoeba. . . . Maybe those others will be luckier.[49]

In an about-face from such skepticism, however, the dénouement of the play depicts Volodya's "positive" reformation under the influence of a stereotyped love situation and the experience of work, producing an effect that is wholly unconvincing, either artistically or psychologically.

Despite this conformist ending, Rozov's portrait of Volodya was attacked by no less a figure than Ilyichev himself, chief of Soviet propaganda, as well as by the usual pack of official literary critics.[50] It is now reported that Rozov has heeded the party's admonitions and rewritten his scenario, deleting the most pungent spots. In the words of one conservative critic, "Volodya has become more mature, more calm, and mentally more healthy—mostly, of course, through the beneficial influence exerted upon him by the community.[51] Rozov, in yielding to official pressure, acted differently from Aksenov, who openly and flatly refused to change his novel.[52] The two writers' opposite reactions reflect the profound political and psychological differences between the genre movement and the avant-garde. The genre authors, while fostering a more complex view of reality that is in itself detrimental to totalitarianism, still refuse to draw conclusions of any radical significance, either in their writings or in their lives.

[48] *Yunost,* No. 9, 1961.

[49] *Ibid.,* pp. 14, 16.

[50] L. Ilyichev, *loc. cit.,* p. 36.

[51] S. Malyshev, "Volodya osilit dorogy" (Volodya Will Master the Way), *Sovetskaia Kultura,* June 23, 1962.

[52] S. Pavlov, *Bolshe vnimaniia vospitaniiu podrastaiushchevo pokoleniia* (More Attention to Education of the Young Generation). XXII sezd KPSS i voprosy ideologicheskoi raboty (The 22nd Communist Party Congress and Problems of Ideological Work), Moscow, 1962, p. 146.

The Lyricists' World of Feeling

The lyrical movement is related to the genre or manners school in its preoccupation with intimate personal relationships, though in many ways it is also close to the avant-garde. The center of its attention, however, is neither the "self" nor the drama of manners, but rather the emotions arising from personal relationships —the world of love and hate, joy and grief—irrespective of everyday conditions, society, or history. The lyrical trend does not aggressively assert the independence of human feelings from the party; it simply takes this independence for granted.

The "lyricists," mostly young authors, are linked by many threads to their 70-year-old patron, the renowned novelist K. Paustovsky, and are represented in the collection *Tarusskie stranitsy* (Tarusa Pages) recently put out by him. To a lesser extent they are grouped around the monthly *Znamia.* In the past they also had links with the magazine *Moskva,* but lately this publication has gone rightist. Probably the most talented of the young Russian lyrical novelists is Yuri Kazakov, a close friend of Paustovsky. The best short stories of Yuri Nagibin and the poetry of his wife, Bella Akhmadulina (ex-wife of Yevtushenko), a poet of great finesse in the Akhmatova tradition, must also be identified with the lyrical trend, although both Nagibin and Akhmadulina have personal links with the avant-garde. On the whole, the lyrical movement represents an even less consistently unified school of thought than do the other literary trends. The most that can be said about it is that it manifests a common mood and a spontaneous common interest in the subjective, the momentary, and the emotional.

The Western explorers of human emotions, ranging from Thornton Wilder to Samuel Beckett and from Franz Werfel to André Gide, have in recent decades displayed an increasing eagerness to scale the peaks of superhuman passions and peer into the precipices of insanity; and there has been a similar trend in Soviet underground literature. The lyricists, however, do not go beyond the limits of the normal; extreme cases are of no interest to them. For one thing, they are just barely beginning to rediscover the world of feeling and

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the complexity of human relationships, now that Stalinist monolithic simplicity is a thing of the past. Thus, much that would seem banal to a Western reader—for example, a perfectly naturalistic description of hostility turning to love [53]—seems to these writers and their readers wonderfully fresh and attractive in its artlessness, and is enjoyed for its own sake without need for philosophical implications.

In its esthetics, the lyrical trend is oriented towards neither the West nor the Russian modernists, but looks rather to the Russian classical prose of writers like Bunin and Chekhov. In their best works, the lyricists take after some of the later Russian classical writers in refusing either to denounce and preach, or to strive for outward drama and brilliance of situation. Their ideal is to present a chronicle of emotion that is outwardly terse but which recreates in precise and realistic detail all changes and nuances of feeling. Even in writing about a historical event—the death of Pushkin—Yu. Kazakov, a young lyricist, adheres to this ideal: he centers his attention on the emotional reaction to this event of the poet Lermontov, who admired and adored Pushkin.[54]

Both Nagibin and Kazakov lately have turned more and more to characters who are "simple," impulsive people not burdened by reflection, who reveal themselves only through emotion—for example, peasants and children. Some of the "perennial topics" that find their way into Kazakov's and, to a lesser extent, Nagibin's writings are the emotional confrontation of passing childhood with coming adulthood; the sudden upsurge of inconsolable grief at the death of a mother, seemingly unloved; the feelings of a man who, because of fatigue, has disregarded the tragedy of another and then—too late—is overcome with shame; the finding of happiness in love. In turning to these subjects that are essentially "neutral," the two authors have openly turned their backs on the neurotic complexity of present-day Soviet existence.

Some of the short stories of Kazakov and Nagibin also display a predilection for paradox: e.g., the wisdom and sensitivity of a dying man versus the blind obtuseness of a strong, living one; the complete rebirth of a dissipated individual as a result of briefly mistaking a "small-time vamp" for a hurt yet forgiving woman; a girl's pure and selfless love given to a village youth who is in love only with himself and thinks mainly of cheap pleasures. These themes suggest the only area of generalization in which the two writers indulge—the conflict between the moral and the natural order of things, between good and reality. Nagibin conveys this idea more frequently and with less subtlety than does Kazakov, and his concept of the good is often stretched to the point of merging with the official credo.

Kazakov never stoops to such harping on "morality," but for all that there are amazingly tasteless spots in some of his stories. An example is his short story about a husband and wife on the verge of divorce, who make up on a foggy night; though otherwise excellent, the story ends on an utterly false and saccharine note ("he wanted to see the stars"). On occasion Kazakov turns to social criticism. In the short story, "V gorod" (Going to Town), he portrays the almost serf-like position of a collective farmer who is rebuffed when he asks his *kolkhoz* chairman for a passport to move into town. But such themes are at best of minor importance for Kazakov, and they never dominate his stories. In "Going to Town," for instance, he does not hesitate to depict the victim of social injustice as a negative and cruel character.

Bella Akhmadulina is equally indifferent to social problems. Hers is a world of sensuous delight with the diversity and variety of life's colors; it is also a world of gentle sadness at man's imperfection, of desire for "serenity and freedom." [55] But her foremost interest is the chronicling of feeling characteristic of the lyrical writers. In form her poetry may be traced to the Acmeists, the later standard-bearers of the Russian classical school of poetry. This leaning towards late Russian classical literature is another common feature of the lyricists.

IN DISCUSSING the various groups in contemporary Soviet literature, we must not forget V. Tendryakov, an author who stands somewhat apart. His *contes philosophiques* combine social criticism with an interest in moral paradoxes and human emotions. Tendryakov's first notable work stressed social criticism, depicting the impoverishment of the collective-farm village.[56] In his latest novels, however, moral paradoxes have come to the fore. Most of all, he is haunted by the inevitability of evil. Why is evil attractive? What makes it so powerful that it cannot be defeated except by another evil, by killing? These are the central issues in his novelette *Valet, dama, korol* (Jack, Queen, King).[57] They are not resolved, but the very posing of them challenges

[53] Yu. Kazakov, "V tumane" (In the Fog), *Ogonyok*, No. 3, 1960.

[54] "Zvon bregeta" (The Chiming of the Timepiece), *Po doroge* (On the Road), Moscow, 1961, pp. 23-39.

[55] B. Akhmadulina, *Struna* (The String), Moscow, 1962.

[56] V. Tendryakov, *Padenie Ivana Chuprova* (The Downfall of Ivan Chuprov), Moscow, 1955.

[57] *Novyi mir*, No. 3, 1960.

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belief in a Communist reign of benevolence which is supposed to result from the reshaping of social relations. For Tendryakov, it is not the vestiges of capitalism that account for evil, but something very deep-rooted in man himself—something that has no definition in the author's atheistic and at the same time pre-Freudian vocabulary. General moral issues, however, do not completely overshadow either Tendryakov's naturalistic description of the hard life of workers engaged in timber-floating (not accidentally, his story was published in *Novyi mir*) or his dynamic treatment of relationships between people. His novels are rich; they combine philosophic ponderings with realistic yet imaginative description, placing Tendryakov in a category by himself among Soviet literary libertarians.

Political Potential of the Liberals

As we have seen, the libertarian camp embraces the most diverse trends: from the drama of manners to avant-garde poetry, and from social criticism to an asocial escape into the world of emotions. The only common denominators of the camp as a whole are its diversity, its concern for man, and its attempts to scrutinize—more or less independently, more or less freely, and more or less honestly—*les conditions humaines*. Its organizational ties, even within individual groups, are extremely tenuous. The groups themselves are largely tentative and barely tolerated by the authorities, although they represent quite real literary trends. From a certain viewpoint their organizational weakness is a source of strength; for, in the atmosphere that has developed since the end of mass terrorism, it is more difficult to disperse something as amorphous as a trend than, say, a writers' club or a well-known literary group with its own program, of the kind that existed in the 1920's. On the other hand, such loose groupings can hardly serve as centers of intellectual resistance to totalitarianism—as did, for example, the "Petöfi Circle" in Hungary. And whenever anything even remotely approaching a Soviet "Petöfi Circle" crops up, the authorities are quick to intervene with an iron hand, as they did in ordering the dissolution of the editorial board of *Literaturnaia Moskva* when it engaged in radical social criticism.

But, the reader may ask, are Soviet writers psychologically prepared to create any kind of organization with an extensive political program, even if they had the opportunity? It is impossible to answer this question with a simple "yes" or "no."

Clearly, the tide of "liberal" ideas tends, of itself, to erode the foundations of totalitarianism by calling into question the subordination of current needs and rights to distant goals, the omnipotence of the party bureaucracy, the insistence upon "unanimity of thought" in world outlook and a single style in art, the party's claim to a monopoly on ultimate truth, the "subordination of the personal to the social," and the naive faith that Utopia can be attained by reshaping social relationships. This is an incomplete but revealing list of the totalitarian practices and doctrines that are challenged by the ideas now finding expression in "above-ground" Soviet literature. Moreover, there can be no doubt that these ideas are expressed in diluted form, either for fear of censorship or as a result of it. On the latter score, we have unambiguous testimony from Soviet writers. Poetess M. Borisova, for example, writes:

> **Suppose something happened to me—a brick smashed into my head . . . a wave swallowed me . . . in short—I am no more. And my colleagues come to my house on the understandable and praiseworthy mission of discovering and publishing, insofar as possible, everything that remains of mine. What will they find in the desk drawer? Could one really expect it to be only the first drafts of already published verses, along with some snatches of unfinished lines? The "iceberg principle" applies here, too—one-eighth visible and seven-eighths submerged. Perhaps not necessarily in this arithmetic ratio, but then arithmetic is not the point.**[58]

Aside from such statements, we know that direct criticism of certain social institutions—for example, collective farms or party control of the army—is absolutely unthinkable in the Soviet press. All these considerations support the argument that the liberal literary camp is intrinsically more radical in the political sense that it appears to be solely on the basis of published writings.

At the same time, many of the liberal Soviet writers consider themselves Communists. Belief in Communist ideology—interpreted in a spirit reminiscent of the later Trotsky—creates a duality in their thinking. On the one hand, this belief impels them toward criticism of the "bureaucracy" for hiding behind Communist ideals while actually pursuing its own selfish interests. On the other hand, fear of "bourgeois" ideas and of forces incompatible with communism (such as radical skepticism or peasant aspirations for private ownership) acts to restrain their criticism. A substantial segment of the liberal camp is striving to find a way of humanizing and democratizing Soviet society that would not at the same time unleash forces inimical to the basic principles of Communist ideology. Their political caution and hesi-

[58] M. Borisova, *op. cit.*

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tancy, even in 1956, are thus attributable not simply to fear of party repression, but also to inner waverings. This complex motivational pattern must not be overlooked in considering the possible emergence of a Soviet "Petöfi Circle." But it would be even more misleading to understate the difference between the liberals and the conservatives.

Before speaking of the conservatives, we must take brief note of an intermediate "group" whose only unifying characteristic is a common effort to rise "above the skirmish." It embraces writers who attained fame prior to the Stalin era and successfully survived that period—Sholokhov, Leonov, and to a lesser degree, Fedin. These writers vacillate between the liberal and conservative camps, alternately supporting first one, then the other, in their rare speeches, but depending on neither—although Fedin leans more often towards a hypercautious liberalism and has consequently been attacked on occasion by the conservatives.[59] Leonov has published almost nothing in the last ten years except a rewritten version,

Literary Psychopathology

Vsevolod Kochetov's new novel, *The Secretary of the District Committee* (*Sekretar Obkoma*), published in book form early this year, is one the most important recent documents in the controversy which divides Soviet writers into "liberals" (*e.g.*, Tvardovsky and Yevtushenko) and "illiberals" (*e.g.*, Surkov, Gribachov and Kochetov himself).

Kochetov's novel describes the struggle between two party secretaries of imaginary adjacent *oblasts*. The hero, Denisov (Secretary of the Stargorod *oblast*) is contrasted with the villain, Artamonov (Secretary of the Vysokogorsk *oblast*). Denisov is supposed to typify all that is most progressive in the "new" type of party leader that has emerged since the dethronement of Stalin. Artamonov, on the other hand, is portrayed as an inveterate Stalinist who tramples on his subordinates and conducts much of his administration through unexpected telephone calls made in the small hours of the morning.

In a long and stinging review in the January 1962 issue of the monthly *Novyi mir*, the critic A. Mariamov points out that the purported conflict between Tweedledum-Denisov and Tweedledee-Artamonov is in fact bogus. The similarities between the two leaders are more important than the differences. Mariamov hints strongly that Kochetov is an unrepentant Stalinist whose attack on Stalinism is mere camouflage intended to disguise his true position.

The novel may be tender towards Stalin, but it is unmistakably polemical in other directions. One of the main targets is Yevgeni Yevtushenko, who appears in thinly-disguised form as the poet "Ptushkov." Ptushkov is pilloried as the idol of hysterical teen-age girls, a devotee of cognac, soft living and sentimental eroticism, whose sordid lyrics tend to commemorate less the achievements of Soviet society than, say, the disadvantages of making love on an excessively creaky bed.

Yevtushenko is not the only character to be lampooned by the device of a rather obvious surname. Amongst other parallels with real-life figures is Artamonov himself. He is modelled on Larionov, once the highly successful secretary of the Riazan *obkom*, whose figures for the production of meat and dairy products were the envy of rival *obkom* secretaries until Larionov's suicide and the subsequent revelations showed these "achievements" to be largely fraudulent. Like Larionov, Artamonov not only cooks his records, but even makes piratical raids on the territory of adjoining *oblasts* where he buys up cattle and butter (at the expense of his own *kolkhozniki*) to swell his production figures.

To some extent poor Larionov was only doing at the *oblast* level what Khrushchev is doing at the national level (*e.g.*, juggling with agricultural verbiage instead of undertaking far-reaching measures). Perhaps Kochetov even wishes us to infer this, since he clearly polemicizes in certain passages of the novel against Khrushchev's neutral stance vis-à-vis the current literary controversy. Here the weak subordinate *obkom* secretary "Ognyov" takes the brunt of the attack for his attempts to keep the local writers happy at all costs by a "policy of balancing." This leads him, for example, to allow Ptushkov to get away with his decadent posing and "bedroom lyrics" instead of squashing him.

Kochetov reveals an almost paranoiac fear of the liberal camp in a passage where he allows Ptushkov to be denounced as a seeker of power who will use that power, when he gets it, to suppress all those who dissent from his views. This confirms what Western students have often suggested—namely, that the illiberal spokesmen feel themselves increasingly out on a limb. They are little read and little respected, and are perhaps tolerated by the party only as a kind of scare mechanism—if the liberals get too much out of hand, the Surkovs and Kochetovs can be brought back to control them. Meanwhile, however, they are at least as much in opposition to Khrushchev as many of the liberals.

In a way it would be a pity to see the disappearance of the quasi-Stalinists. *The Secretary of the District Committee* is a fascinating document for students of literary psychopathology, and it would be sad to think that it might be the last of its kind.

Ronald Hingley

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Stalinist in spirit, of his earlier heretical novel *Vor* (Thief); Sholokhov carefully avoids any themes that might stir up new controversy around his name; and Fedin's new novel *Koster* (The Bonfire) reflects the same restrained attitude as his speeches. Both conservatives and liberals make meaningless bows to these "famous personages" in order not to incur their enmity. The literary battle meanwhile passes them by, evidently frightening them off by its severity and the polarity of the positions taken.

The Conservatives

The conservative critic, D. Starikov, who has the sorry fame of being one of the chief persecutors of Ye. Yevtushenko, recently wrote: "From generation to generation of crusaders for the cause there has been transmitted a sense of the genuine fullness of human existence attained only in service to the future." [60] In short, life's only fulfillment lies in service to the Communist future, and in the people's interest everything should be subordinated to this service: such is the point of departure for the conservative position. "I cannot help but measure everything against the struggle between the two worlds [capitalist and socialist]," says the positive hero of a novel by the most zealous of the conservatives, V. Kochetov.[61] The conservatives' attitude to art is similarly derived. They conceive of art as simply one of the keys to the mind and soul in creating a new Communist man. The education of this man through "depicting the heroic acts of the Soviet people as they build communism"—this is the major task of both artist and writer. The esthetic theory of the conservatives thus coincides fully with the views on culture held by the party apparatus, as reflected in the new Party Program. It is not surprising, therefore, that the conservatives hold extraordinarily strong organizational positions in Soviet cultural life. They are the proprietors of the official Writers' Unions (with a few exceptions of recent origin, which will be described in the third part of this article). They are also the editors of most of the magazines: *Oktiabr, Moskva, Zvezda, Ogonyok, Neva*, and a score of others. They decide the fate of books in the majority of publishing houses. About 70 percent of all literature and literary criticism printed in the country is supplied by the orthodox writers. What does their output consist of?

As for poetry, it has changed very little since the days of Stalin. There are the same elementary rhymes, the same resounding odes to the party and to Lenin, now with Stalin's name deleted. The Stalin plan for the transformation of nature has been replaced in neo-orthodox poetry by the virgin lands, the struggle against the Marshall Plan by the struggle against colonialism. But beyond these unavoidable changes in theme—except for a few faint strains of *ersatz* sincerity as the sole concession to the times [62]—the poetry of all the Gribachevs, Dolmatovskis and Oshanins remains, as it was ten years ago, "semi-classicist, semi-art, not overly socialist and far from realistic," in the words of A. Tertz.[63] Only that chief oracle of former times, Aleksei Surkov, has fallen silent, for reasons unknown. There are few young writers of poetry among the conservatives, and these spend their time thinking up more or less dull propaganda clichés.

The prose of the conservatives has undergone much more of a change in the last decade. The theory that no conflict could exist in Soviet society, inspiring a fatuous literature in which clashes took place only between the "good" and the "better," quickly crumbled in the wake of the post-Stalin regime's revelations of the deep ills of the Stalin era. The conservatives had to follow suit by admitting the existence of societal problems and conflicts.

The more moderate element in the conservative camp deals with the same themes as do the social critics, but in a very different way. G. Nikolayeva's novel, *Bitva v puti* (Battle on the Way), speaks of terrorism and of party interference in personal life. M. Zhestev's novel, *Tatiana Tarkhanova*,[64] describes a peasant revolt and the exceedingly cruel wholesale deportation of peasants during collectivization. Both Nikolayeva and Zhestev, along with other moderate conservatives, recognize the existence of doubts, wavering, failures and suffering (even describing concentration camps). However, there is one *sine qua non* of their works: the wise party, in the final analysis, unfailingly irons out all conflicts and injustices and brings things to a happy ending. Furthermore, the "positive" heroes, however great the injustice they suffer, are never for a moment allowed to doubt the outcome. In contrast to the writers of social criticism,

[59] See speech of V. Kochetov at 22nd Party Congress, *Literaturnaia gazeta*, October 31, 1961.

[60] D. Starikov, "Chelovechnost boitsa" (The Humanity of a Fighter), *Oktiabr*, No. 6, 1962, p. 186.

[61] V. Kochetov, *Sekretar obkoma* (The Oblast Party Secretary), *Zvezda*, No. 8, 1961, p. 18.

[62] *E.g.*, V. Kotov, "Piatyi lepestok" (The Fifth Petal), long poem. *Zvezda*, No. 9, 1961.

[63] *On Socialist Realism*, New York, Pantheon Books, 1960, p. 91.

[64] *Zvezda*, Nos. 1-3, 1962.

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the conservatives know no genuine tragedy, no inevitability, no real desperation. The most terrible of circumstances—arrest of an innocent person or violent death—are for them simply more or less serious errors, which the party will not fail to correct in the end.

Another group of conservatives specializes in pseudo-problems handed down from above. One of the recent favorites has been the inner triumph of Soviet people over the remnants of their private-ownership instincts. An example is E. Permyak's novel, *Staraia vedma* (The Old Hag),[65] inspired in part by the party's recent campaign against private home ownership (a practice which was encouraged only three years ago). In the story, the villain makes a fortune by breeding rats as a private business and selling them to research institutes for experiments. The hero, convinced by this loathsome example of the perniciousness of private property, realizes that he himself is also guilty since he has built his own house and has been selling produce grown in his private plot on the open market. An "abhorrence" of his house grows within him, and he finally leaves his wife, because she refuses to transfer the house to the factory party committee for use as a kindergarten.

EQUALLY ABSURD ARE modern variations of the classic theme of socialist realism, "boy loves girl, girl loves tractor," still sometimes found in pure form. In the play *Chestnost* (Honesty), by A. Sofronov, a tractor driver breaks off his engagement to a milkmaid because she is a statistics-padder, and reports her to the *oblast* party secretary. This play has one virtue over Permyak's novels in that the problem of statistics-padding is much more immediate and real than the ideological problem of property attitudes, yet in both works the "solutions" provided typify the patently false and often farcial aspects of neo-orthodox literary propaganda.

Among the neo-orthodox writers, V. Kochetov, author of the novels *Bratia Yershovy* (The Yershov Brothers) and *Sekretar obkoma* (Oblast Party Secretary), has gained the greatest fame. Kochetov is the staunchest of the conservatives; he defends the Stalinist system as the correct political form in the "conflicts between the two worlds," and abhors the slightest compromise of absolute party rule, specifically of the absolute power of the party secretaries. His novels are both a diatribe against the liberals—sometimes with clear allusions to personalities, such as Yevtushenko—and an exhortation for their chastisement. He has also protested against de-Stalinization, against the overly liberal (in his opinion) policy of Khrushchev towards the artistic intelligentsia, and even against some of Khrushchev's specific political measures.[66] In Kochetov's view, these trends play into the hands of the forces in Soviet society which are opposed to the power of the party secretaries. In particular he despises the intelligentsia, with the exception, of course, of those who cast in their lot with the party officials. He frequently contrasts the "educated criticizers" with the "simple," dedicated citizens who ask little for themselves and help prepare for the "ultimate decisive battle."

Kochetov's novels, and those of other conservatives, are marked by the standard clichés of good and bad, black and white. Characters who express "erroneous" thoughts are endowed with all the vices—from baseness and stupidity to lewdness and drunkenness. The "positive" party secretaries, on the other hand, lack only wings to make them angels. It is impossible to associate either Nikolayeva or Kochetov with any literary tradition save that of the didactic dime novel with its "villains" and its "paragons of virtue." But at least dime novels are written for the entertainment of an undiscriminating public: one cannot say the same for the trash put out by some of the Soviet conservatives. That the party accords them such extensive (although no longer exclusive) opportunities for publication is only because of their consistent support of the principle of party supremacy.

Party policy towards literature, and the maneuvers of literary groups vis-à-vis the party, constitute the third essential element of current Soviet literary politics, to be discussed in the third and last part of this article.

[65] *Moskva,* Nos. 5-6, 1961.

[66] *Sekretar obkoma, op. cit., Zvezda,* 1961, No. 8, p. 93; No. 9, pp. 13-15, 124.

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The Year 1917

The Russian Provisional Government, 1917,
Documents, selected and edited by
Robert Paul Browder and Alexander F. Kerensky.
Stanford, Calif., Stanford University Press, 1961.

Reviewed by Jesse D. Clarkson

IN 1927 THE LATE Professor Frank A. Golder published his *Documents of Russian History, 1914-1917.* Since then a stream of valuable collections of translated documents dealing with various aspects of the Russian Revolution and its aftermath has issued from what is now called The Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace, at Stanford University. The three volumes under consideration are the latest and one of the most ambitious contributions to this stream. Very largely, they represent a return to the concept of the original Golder volume, though concentrating solely on the events that took place during the nine-month period from the collapse of the monarchy to the seizure of power by the Bolsheviks. This narrowed focus of the Browder-Kerensky work, coupled with its massiveness, permits a far deeper and wider coverage than was possible in the pioneer work.

The inception of this project must be credited to Witold S. Sworakowski, Assistant Director of the Hoover Institution. In 1954 he published a survey of the library's holdings which disclosed the existence at Stanford of enormous untapped materials relating to the Provisional Government and its manifold activities. His findings were fully confirmed by Alexander F. Kerensky, who, after visiting the library in 1955, indicated his willingness to help prepare a selection of documents dealing with the period in which he had been the principal actor. Professor Robert P. Browder, of the University of Colorado, agreed to collaborate with Kerensky as joint editor of a two-volume publication which, in the course of more than four years of toil, was expanded to the present three volumes. The two editors proved a remarkable team: Browder, a trained historian, supplied the necessary meticulous scholarly caution, while Kerensky's personal knowledge —even though obscured by inevitable partisanship—was invaluable in recapturing the spirit of the successive governments, in all of which he had been a member. It does great honor to both of these disparate partners that they were able to work together and produce so comprehensive a mosaic of the Russian Revolution.

The staff of translators who assisted the editors deserve the praise their chiefs give them. Nevertheless, the English rendition does suffer from flaws which are only partly due to the fact that the authors of the original documents were not always educated men and often wrote under pressure; they are also the product of the translators' efforts to simplify the materials by free rendition, and on occasion they stem from their apparent difficulty in finding the best English equivalents for Russian technical terms. It was impossible for Professor Browder to be wholly successful in smoothing out the resultant unevenness.

It will not be the fault of the translators, however, if many American readers, accustomed to thinking of the "March revolution" and the "November seizure of power," find the use of Russian (O.S.) dates confusing, especially as some documents in the collection are given in the Western (N.S.) form. Though there is much to be said in favor of using dates according to the contemporary Russian calendar, there seems to be a clear advantage in translating Julian calendar dates into the Gregorian equivalents where a work for the benefit of foreign readers is in question.

THE ORGANIZATION of these volumes was planned with the idea of enabling the reader to trace the development of any particular theme—be it the agrarian problem, industry, trade and transport, education, religion, the armed forces, or foreign policy—without hav-

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ing to concern himself with aspects of the revolution in which he might have less interest. Unfortunately, the revolution by its very nature does not permit of such compartmentalization, for its impact on all aspects of life was so powerful that developments in one sphere are not comprehensible without cross-reference to those in the others. Moreover, the revolution steadily gathered force, and the history of the period is best understood in terms of successive stages, for each of which a topical subdivision might have been useful. Paradoxically, the editors chose to reserve their treatment of the changing locus of power (reflected by the May crisis, the July Days, the Kornilov *putsch*, and "October") for the last volume. This is unfortunate, since without a knowledge of these crucial crises, much of the preceding material is quite unintelligible. With an organization emphasizing chronology, the main lines of development might have been made to emerge more clearly, while an eclectic reader could still have satisfied his own peculiar tastes by using the table of contents and the index.

The amateur of communism may be disappointed in these volumes. Save for occasional references to "anarchist-communists" (non-Leninists), he will find the word "communist" only once, and that in a footnote (p. 1207) intended to explain Lenin's demand—in the April Theses, but not acted upon until March 1918—that his party colleagues accept a change of name from "Russian Social Democratic Workers' Party (of the Bolsheviks)" to "Communist Party."

The term "Bolshevik," to be sure, occurs more frequently, though not more often than on one page out of six, and mostly only as a passing reference. It is a circumstance that accurately reflects how little the Bolsheviks actually had to do with the revolution, except to subvert it. Their name appears regularly in connection with their continuous and strenuous sabotage of every effort to establish a democratic regime, to check the precipitous decline of the economy, or to lay the necessary foundations guaranteeing the rights of the individual. A positive policy the Bolsheviks did not have, save in the matter of establishing a dictatorship, nominally of the proletariat and the poorer peasantry, but actually—and admittedly—of the "conscious vanguard" of the masses, *i.e.*, of whatever elements accepted the authority of the Bolshevik Party. Since their purposes required destruction of any organized force that might be employed against them, they concentrated largely on efforts to disintegrate the army. This in turn made them play into the hands of the Germans, lending color to the allegations that they were in German pay. The documentation of Bolshevik activity is therefore extensive—and properly so—only in connection with the July Days, with the decline of military morale at the front, and with the preparation of "October." The initial collapse of the old regime, when there were no significant Bolsheviks on the spot; the May crisis, occurring at a time when the Bolsheviks had not yet recovered from the shock of Lenin's "April Theses"; and the Kornilov affair, when Bolshevik influence was at its lowest ebb—all these phenomena require little or no documentation of Bolshevik activity.

The broader concept of "Marxism" also receives short shrift. Its founder appears only four times: twice when non-Marxists paid their respects to Karl Marx, and twice in letters addressed by Lenin to the Bolshevik Central Committee, when he quoted Marx's phrase, "uprising is an art," with approbation.

IT MAY BE NOT without interest in this connection to note some of the differences between these volumes and their nearest Soviet counterparts. Although study of the revolution is not currently among the main "tasks" set for Soviet historians, the Russians have over the years published an abundance of documents relating to it, mostly in periodical literature. They have also made two major efforts to bring together selected documentary material in collected form.

The earlier of these efforts was the ten-volume set edited by M. N. Pokrovsky and Ya. A. Yakovlev, published between 1925 and 1930 as *1917 god v dokumentakh i materialakh* (The Year 1917 in Documents and Materials). Included in this collection are the full texts of the proceedings of the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet (to June 17), of the All-Russian Conference of Soviets, of the First and Second All-Russian Congresses of Soviets (all of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies), of the State Conference, and of the Constituent Assembly. In only four of the volumes was an attempt made to present a topical treatment of specific themes: "The Peasant Movement," "The Disintegration of the Army," "The Workers' Movement," and "The Bourgeoisie on the Eve of the February (*i.e.*, March) Revolution." The work thus does not add up to a comprehensive treatment of the revolution. Apart from the stenographic records mentioned above (from which only a few speeches and resolutions have been included in the Browder-Kerensky volumes), only the volume dealing with the disintegration of the army has not been superseded.

The more recent major Soviet attempt to document the revolution was made in 1957-59 by the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, under the general editorship of A. L. Sidorov. Significantly, the work is entitled

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Velikaia Oktiabrskaia Sotsialisticheskaia Revolutsia (The Great October Socialist Revolution) and treats the nine months of the revolutionary period simply as preparation for the culminating seizure of power by the Bolsheviks. From the organizational standpoint, it is in some ways superior to the American collection, for the six volumes are individually devoted to periods of one or two months, thus keeping together the diverse facets of the revolution as it developed. On the other hand, each volume (except the last) is mechanically divided into seven standardized parts, though in some cases special chapters are added to deal with political developments of major importance (the "April"—*i.e.,* May— crisis, the June demonstration, the July Days, the Sixth Party Congress, the Moscow Conference, and the Kornilov "mutiny"). Within each of the seven categories, the documents are presented in strict chronological order and—also in contrast to the Browder-Kerensky documents—without omissions. The pretentious headings given the seven conventionalized subdivisions are so revealing of the spirit that governed the selection of the documents that it may be worth listing them: (1) The Russian Social-Democratic Workers' Party (of the Bolsheviks)—the Guide of the Revolution; (2) The Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies—the Organs of the Revolutionary-Democratic Dictatorship of the Proletariat and the Peasantry; (3) The Provisional Government—the Organ of the Dictatorship of the Bourgeoisie and the Landlords; (4) The Workers' Movement; (5) The Revolutionary Movement in the Army and Navy; (6) The Peasant Movement; (7) The Nationalities Movement.

THE SHEER BULK of this collection—it comprises 4,666 documents—might seem to indicate more thorough documentation than is offered by the Browder-Kerensky volumes with their modest total of 1,439 documents. These figures, however, lose their impact when one examines the nature of the items included, only two or three hundred of which are common to both works. Certain aspects of the revolutionary period—foreign relations, economic developments, the nationality problem in its wider scope—have indeed been virtually omitted from the Soviet collection, partly because they had been extensively dealt with in earlier publications, such as Dimanshtein's *Revolutsiia i natsionalnyi vopros* (The Revolution and the Nationality Question [1930]) or *Ekonomicheskoe polozhenie Rossii nakanune Velikoi Oktiabrskoi Sotsialisticheskoi Revolutsii* (The Economic Condition of Russia on the Eve of the Great October Socialist Revolution [2 vols., 1957]) on both of which Browder and Kerensky have drawn heavily.

Most of the material included in the Soviet collection is designed to suggest a grass-roots origin of the Bolshevik seizure of power. Documentation of the acts both of the Provisional Government and of the central soviets is kept to a minimum, while the collection is overloaded with a flood of resolutions and telegrams emanating from local soviets in Moscow and the provinces, from party organs and individual factories, from army units and villages throughout the land. In contrast, the Browder-Kerensky documents emphasize the strivings of the Provisional Government, its relations with the Petrograd Soviet and the All-Russian Congress of Soviets, with the Allies, and with its own subordinate organs both at the local and the central level. The result is material from which the course of the "bourgeois-democratic revolution" can be plotted, whereas the Soviet documents give only a picture of increasing inchoate dissatisfaction with the halting progress made by the Provisional Government. The genuine efforts of that government to produce a better society are thus left in the fog that concealed them from the Russian masses in 1917. From the American, but not from the Soviet, volumes there also emerges the tragic picture of the dominant Socialist-Revolutionaries, whose program corresponded more closely to the views of the masses, but whose fear of possible civil war, with its danger of opening the way to counterrevolution, held them back from attempting immediate implementation of their own dreams.

The difference between the scholarly approach of the American work and the tendentious handling of the Soviet volumes comes out very clearly in the treatment of various individuals. This is naturally most conspicious in the case of Trotsky: the Browder-Kerensky documents, despite their paucity of references to the Bolsheviks, make it clear that Trotsky became a Bolshevik leader second only to Lenin in driving force; in the six Soviet volumes he is mentioned in the documents only 17 times, and largely accidentally (*e.g.,* in connection with a demand for expulsion of "the fifteen Jews" from the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet), but in the index he is characterized as "the worst foe of Leninism; returned from abroad in 1917 and joined the Mezhraiontsy; was received into the Bolshevik Party at the Sixth Congress; in 1927 was expelled from the party for anti-party and anti-Socialist activities; deported from the USSR in 1929 and in 1932 deprived of Soviet citizenship." Only a little less glaring is the difference in the treatment of Zinoviev and Kamenev, who, as is clear in the American documents, were until "October" almost as prominent among the Bolsheviks as Lenin himself, but who are pictured in the Soviet collection as

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a drag on the great leader. Though in the index they are treated somewhat more gently than Trotsky, the documentary references relating to them are designed to emphasize that they (Kamenev in particular) would have been removed from any responsible party post had it not been for the fear of a "scandal" that would have given comfort to bourgeois and petty-bourgeois "slanderers."

BUT IT IS NOT merely that the Browder-Kerensky work gives a bird's-eye view in contrast to the worm's-eye view of the Soviet collection. The selection of documents has also been profoundly influenced by the historical view of the editors. To Browder and Kerensky, the Provisional Government represented a noble effort, inspired by West European liberal concepts, to establish in the midst of incredible physical difficulties and deep political disagreements a viable democratic regime. The outlook of the Soviet editors, on the other hand, is more in consonance with the traditional Russian attachment to the idea of a powerful government guiding the life and work of the citizens; it reflects a strong sense of a peculiar Russian destiny and acquiescence in the suppression of individual expression.

A special feature of the Browder-Kerensky volumes is worth mentioning. By drawing extensively on the exceptionally rich collection of newspaper files in the Hoover Institution, the editors were able not only to illumine the actions of the government during the struggle for power, but also to reflect the light in which diverse Russian observers on the spot viewed the developments unfolding before them.

Although the Browder-Kerensky compilation, like the Soviet collection, is necessarily inadequate for the purposes of the research specialist in the history of the Russian Revolution, it should perform a great service, even to the specialist, by providing a uniquely wide perspective on the role of the Provisional Government, by opening many leads for further study, and by making available a mass of material hitherto largely inaccessible even to those who can read Russian. For the general historian, and even for the layman, this selection contains an invaluable mine of trustworthy information.

The Poet and His Society

The Pasternak Affair: Courage of Genius,
by Robert Conquest.
Philadelphia, Lippincott, 1961.

Reviewed by Leo Laufer

EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE an event occurs in the history of a nation which reveals more about the character of its society than could volumes of political and sociological analysis. The Pasternak affair, as it is now called, was such an event. It has taught the world much about the price exacted in post-Stalin Soviet society for personal courage and artistic integrity, and it has provided a dramatic case study of political development in Khrushchev's Russia.

Mr. Laufer is an American student of Soviet affairs and a past contributor to Problems of Communism.

Consider for a moment the highlights of the drama which began unfolding just about six years ago. Boris Pasternak, long acknowledged in the USSR as a great and unorthodox poet, abandons hope that he will ever see his novel, *Dr. Zhivago,* published in the Soviet Union. Since he values the book as his life's crowning literary achievement, he arranges to have it published abroad. The Soviet literary commissars make every effort to prevent the appearance of the book, and when, in 1957, publication seems inevitable and imminent, Pasternak is publicly attacked in the Soviet press. In October 1958 he is awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature, and the Soviet regime responds with such violence that the "affair" turns into a world sensation. The full force of the Soviet propaganda machinery is applied to pillory the hapless poet and bring him to his knees. But he retracts nothing—only as a gesture of good will toward

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his government he declines to accept the proffered Nobel Prize.

In the meantime, spokesmen for the state continue to rant and to threaten, but the regime shrinks from inflicting physical punishment. Only after the poet's death, the state reverts to old practice and takes its revenge on those who were closest to him. Yet, eventually, the self-appointed custodians of the arts begin to relent again: Pasternak's poems and translations (though not *Dr. Zhivago*) begin to appear again in his native country, as do occasional guarded tributes to his genius. Who then is the victor—the poet or the state? And what does the story reveal about the condition of freedom in the Soviet state?

ROBERT CONQUEST'S notably objective study of the Pasternak affair answers the first question beyond any doubt. Sixty-four pages of documentary material from Communist sources and the arguments of Pasternak's enemies—both presented with scrupulous fairness by the author—cannot obscure the poet's moral triumph over his adversaries. The book chronicles in great detail Pasternak's travail during the violent campaign of defamation that was unloosed against him after the announcement of the Nobel Prize award in October 1958. Within a few days he was denounced by all the leading Soviet newspapers, called a "literary weed," a "snake," a "pig," expelled from the Writers' Union, threatened with expulsion from the country, and attacked as a public enemy in factories and schools from Leningrad to Vladivostok. Under the pressure of the assault Pasternak renounced the coveted award but rejected as absurd the accusations against himself and his book in an eloquent letter to *Pravda*. A few months before his death in May 1960 he told a foreign interviewer that he was "immensely happy and proud" of his work and the admiration it had received abroad.

Mr. Conquest's judgment that "even in death and disgrace, the moral victory is with Pasternak" will certainly be vindicated. Equally fitting is the title of the book—"Courage of Genius"—a wonderfully descriptive phrase which the author adopted from an appreciation of Pasternak by the American critic Edmund Wilson. Where Mr. Conquest has fallen short, however, is in answering the second question posed earlier in this review: What insights into the precepts and practices of the Khrushchev regime does the Pasternak affair reveal? The facts on which to base a judgment are almost all present in Mr. Conquest's narrative, but their evaluation in the broader context of the post-Stalin era is lacking. This is all the more regrettable since literature has traditionally played a key role in Soviet political life; in fact, it may be regarded as the touchstone of a whole range of the party's policies.

THE PASTERNAK AFFAIR was the biggest storm to hit the turbulent Soviet literary scene since the 20th Party Congress. It was at that time indeed, in the spring of 1956, that the manuscript of *Dr. Zhivago* was first circulated among Soviet editors and publishers, but in spite of the bolder spirit that began asserting itself in the Soviet literary world, publication of the novel still appeared too dangerous an undertaking. According to Mr. Conquest, Pasternak had originally hoped that at least an abridged version could be published in the USSR, but by May 1956 he gave up hope, since "everyone put the responsibility for decision on someone higher up, and in the end there was no one who felt his position strong enough to approve publication."

From the standpoint of the overseers of Soviet literature this caution and mistrust were not altogether unjustified, for within a year, as a result of the October revolts in Poland and Hungary, Khrushchev personally intervened to tighten the ideological screws once more.

But even this reassertion of party control over letters was only a faint portent of the storm that struck after the publication of *Dr. Zhivago* abroad and the announcement of the Nobel Prize award. The virulence of the attack against Pasternak, his expulsion from the Writers' Union, and ultimately the trial and conviction of Pasternak's friend, Olga Ivinskaya, and her daughter Irina on trumped-up charges of currency smuggling were reminiscent of the *Zhdanovshchina* of the early years of the postwar era.

Eventually, however, countervailing tendencies came to the fore. The threat to expel Pasternak from the USSR, which had been made publicly in Khrushchev's presence, was never carried out, and the poet was not imprisoned or otherwise physically harmed. He could go on writing and apparently was never cut off from contact with his friends inside or outside the USSR. Undoubtedly, much of this restraint was the result of the strenuous efforts of the Soviet leadership to placate public opinion abroad; the recent release of Irina Ivinskaya from prison was another move in that direction.

The pressure of public opinion at home apparently played a role too, since Pasternak was much admired in the Soviet Union, particularly by the younger intelligentsia. Fifteen hundred people turned up at his funeral, despite the official denunciations and the fact that the date of the burial had never been publicly announced. (The news of his death had been given in a

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three-line announcement in a literary journal.) Among those who came to pay their respects were peasants, workers, and students, as well as prominent artists, including the pianist Sviatoslav Richter, the writers Konstantin Paustovsky and Veniamin Kaverin, and, representing her husband who was abroad at the time, Liubov Ehrenburg. The critic Valentin Asmus, who pronounced the eulogy, hailed Pasternak as a man of "purity" and "honesty of convictions," a "true democrat" who "followed sincerely the ideals of art and had the ability to express humanity in its highest terms."

These individual acts of courage, as well as the relative restraint which the Soviet regime imposed upon itself, are among the important new elements of the post-Stalin era. Yet as Mr. Conquest's account also shows, these incipient liberalizing trends exist side by side with traditional Stalinist obscurantism, which still permeates so much of official Soviet thinking and sometimes erupts with conspicuous virulence.

The Pasternak affair is a significant episode in this greater drama of social change which is taking place in the Soviet Union today.

Communism, Religion and the Churches

Religion in the Soviet Union,
by Walter Kolarz.
New York, St. Martin's Press, 1961.

The Churches and the Soviet Union,
by Constantin de Grunwald.
New York, The Macmillan Co., 1962.

The Russian Revolution and Religion,
by Boleslaw Szczesniak.
Notre Dame, University of Notre Dame Press, 1955.

Communism and the Churches,
by Ralph Lord Roy.
New York, Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1960.

Reviewed by Jeremy R. Azrael

IN HIS WORK, *Religion in the Soviet Union,* the late Walter Kolarz has produced what will surely be for many years to come the definitive survey of religious life in the USSR. The scope of Mr. Kolarz's study is absolutely prodigious, covering all major and an incredible number of minor religious groups on the Soviet scene.

Mr. Azrael, who teaches sociology at Chicago University, recently spent nine months in the Soviet Union as an exchange student at Leningrad University. This is his first contribution to Problems of Communism.

Non-specialists will be particularly grateful to Mr. Kolarz for his extensive discussion of the Old Believers and various Russian and Western Protestant sects, since literature dealing with these groups has not heretofore been easily available. Even when treating so familiar a subject as the Orthodox Church, however, Mr. Kolarz has something new to offer, thanks to his intensive concern with ethnography and geography. In a few brief pages he casts a great deal of light on the complex problems of non-Russian Orthodoxy, particularly in the Ukraine, Belorussia, and Georgia, and on the use of religion as an instrument of Russification.

The weakest chapters of the study are those dealing with non-Christian religions—primarily, one feels, because of the author's lack of sensitivity to the character or "spirit" of the belief system involved—although lack of data must have played a considerable part, particularly where Buddhism is concerned. His interpretation of Jewish life in the USSR is particularly controversial. The book clearly implies that, where Jews are concerned, a "natural" process of secularization has had as much to do with the decline of spiritual life as have Soviet anti-religious activities. We read that in the West many Jews "have either withdrawn altogether from participation in Jewish religious life or participate only for reasons of national heritage and family ties and no longer from religious conviction." Evidently, Mr. Kolarz failed to appreciate the intimate relationship of national heritage,

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family ties and religious conviction in the Jewish tradition. Furthermore, it is not clear why he singled out the Jews as peculiarly prone to secularization. More attention could also have been devoted to the Soviet exploitation of anti-Semitism, as well as to the favored position of the Georgian Jews in Soviet Jewish life—a position due to the absence of indigenous anti-Semitism in Georgia and to the fact that the Georgian Jews do not share the same "cosmopolitan" heritage as the European, including the Russian, Jews.

In view of the other accomplishments of the book, however, such issues are peripheral. On the whole, Mr. Kolarz's last work is perhaps the most remarkable product of his relatively short yet prodigious life: balanced, informative, and judicious, *Religion in the Soviet Union* has placed all students of Soviet affairs in his debt.

SUCH A JUDGMENT cannot, unfortunately, be applied to Constantin de Grunwald's *The Churches and the Soviet Union.* To put the case mildly, M. de Grunwald's study—the main substance of which is a recounting of interviews and observations made by the author during a tour of the Soviet Union in the summer of 1960—is grossly simplistic. His tour convinced M. de Grunwald that "so far as Soviet Russia is concerned . . . worship enjoys complete liberty there."

This conviction derived primarily from the fact that wherever the author went, he "saw open churches with large congregations." Having been shown an open mosque in Tashkent, he concluded that he "had been given incontestable proof that Islam enjoys complete liberty" in that city. Closed churches did not disturb M. de Grunwald, who saw them as marks of the fact that "religion is not *en vogue* in the Soviet Union" and as symbols of the success achieved by Soviet anti-religious propagandists—men who, incidentally, reminded the author "more of Renan than of Nero." That freedom of worship and open churches are not coterminous seems never to have occurred to him. Certainly he was not disturbed by the possibility that open churches had been bought at a high price in terms of political appeasement and support. Thus, of Metropolitan Nikolai's forays into the world of politics, he writes:

Should he be intransigently hostile to the government which has given his church legal existence and protects it from all violence? Who could imagine that the Cardinal-Archbishop of Paris or the Archbishop of Canterbury would take an official stand against the President of the French Republic or the Queen of England?

Rhetorical questions, of course, are not meant to be answered. Suffice it to note that M. de Grunwald's first question is indicative of his insistence on dealing in absolutes, and his second of a lack of "imagination" that is disturbing in a professional historian, especially one who has lived in France for forty-five years.

If one is not supposed to answer rhetorical questions, however, one is presumably entitled to ask them. Why, since M. de Grunwald was anxious to inform the public about all facets of religion in the USSR, did he not explain the fact that "the last German republic of the Volga, formerly a leading center of Protestantism, no longer exists?" M. de Grunwald claims that in Moscow's main synagogue he found "every bench . . . lined with men, each of them with his black-and-white prayer shawl about his shoulders." Since so many other visitors claim, on the contrary, that prayer shawls are not widely available and that this fact is deeply resented, why didn't the author include in his book a photograph of what he saw instead of one, taken on the holiest of Jewish holidays, showing shawl-less worshipers around the altar?

Again, why did M. de Grunwald not explain to his puzzled readers the discrepancy between his view of typical Soviet life outside the cities ("asphalt roads which stretch for hundreds of kilometers, flourishing *kolkhozes* with neat little houses, and . . . harvesters dressed like any western field-worker") and that of, say, N. S. Khrushchev, who has publicly deplored the lagging pace of agricultural and rural progress? And why did M. de Grunwald not explain to his fellow social scientists the techniques which enabled him to achieve such instantaneous rapport with those he interviewed that "with extraordinarily moving candor, they all expressed their most heartfelt convictions"? Finally, why did he not explain the procedures whereby he selected so perfect a sample of the Soviet population that he felt able to assert: "Whether the critics of the Soviet Union like it or not, the present government can depend upon the unanimous support of its people. . . . The fact is indisputable"? Is it rather the author's bias that is indisputable?

IN HIS STUDY, *The Russian Revolution and Religion,* Boleslaw Szczesniak offers the reader "a collection of documents concerning the suppression of religion by the Communists, 1917-1925." The author's introduction to the collection, while useful, is disappointingly cursory and is marred by some extraordinarily cumbersome writing. ("In the sphere of religion the terror possesses special significance, deep penetration to the soul, requiring particularly strong character leading in its opposition to martyrdom." "The barbarous manner of the govern-

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mental collection of church valuables, according to vast testimony, and this type of destruction inflicted upon the church properties, naturally expressed the official contempt for religion in general.") The volume also includes appendices that provide a useful chronology of major Soviet legislation relevant to the status of religion and the churches, a series of brief biographies of important clerics, a list of saints whose relics were desecrated by anti-religious groups, and various statistics on the Roman Catholic Church in Russia.

As for the documents themselves, Professor Szczesniak has selected and arranged them in a manner which makes remarkably lively reading. Unfortunately, however, the author chose to confine his selection almost exclusively to documents relating to the affairs of the Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches. Moreover, even within these limits, so much attention is given to Roman Catholicism that the lay reader would almost perforce conclude that the latter was of greater significance in Soviet life than was actually the case. On the other hand, for the specialist, it is precisely the documents on the Roman Catholic Church—documents drawn primarily from the papers of the late Father Walsh, former Papal Delegate to Russia, and of Archbishop Cieplak, the last Roman Catholic Metropolitan-Administrator in Russia—that are of greatest interest and utility.

One might also question the author's decision to make the largest single category of documents in the collection American diplomatic reports (chiefly from the US Legation in Riga). While these reports serve the function of providing, as it were, a running commentary or storyline for the volume as a whole, fewer "secondary" and more "primary" sources would have been desirable. Still, the reports make fascinating reading. For example, in 1922, according to US diplomats, the Kremlin was seriously considering admitting large numbers of Jesuit missionaries into Soviet Russia in the hope of undermining the position of Orthodoxy and gaining the Vatican's support in normalizing relations with the West, while the Vatican was considering signing a concordat with the Bolsheviks in the hope of preventing an Anglican-Orthodox alliance or merger. Whether such documents tell more about American diplomats or about the world of *Realpolitik,* this reviewer is not certain, but Professor Szczesniak has performed a service of sorts in raising the question. His volume, despite its flaws and partly because of them, is interesting and useful.

OFFERING A CHANGE in locale, Ralph Lord Roy's *Communism and the Churches* is a volume in the Fund for the Republic's series on "Communism in American Life" and deals with the relations between the churches and the US Communist Party from 1917 to the present. To those familiar with the history of American communism, the main outlines of Mr. Roy's study will be familiar, since the CPUSA's basic policy *vis-à-vis* the churches was similar in most essentials to its policy *vis-à-vis* other American institutions and organizations such as the trade unions, albeit less forceful and well-coordinated. The specification which Mr. Roy's study provides is, however, useful. It is particularly so where the American Negroes are concerned, for, as Mr. Roy makes clear and as the American Communists were forced to recognize once they abandoned their "isolationism" of the 1920's, the churches play a particularly vital role in Negro life in this country. One regrets only that Mr. Roy felt compelled to treat the Negro churches briefly, owing to the fact that another book in the series deals with communism and the Negro community.

Again, although the story of the sudden shifts in the party line between 1938 and 1941 is well known, Mr. Roy's particular focus on religion provides an unusually graphic illustration of the Communists' opportunistic exploitation of the idealism of others in conjunction with these shifts. Specifically, we see how the idealism of religiously-motivated pacifists was tapped and shaped to the American party's ends.

A major task which Mr. Roy set himself was to examine the degree of Communist infiltration into the churches. Even those who tend to see a Communist in every American closet should recognize the validity of Mr. Roy's conclusion that such penetration of the churches was slight even during the heyday of the United Front. The social historian will regret, however, that Mr. Roy did not choose to offer a more thorough discussion of the historical radicalism of certain American churches, as well as the religious character of certain branches of the populist movement, as factors relevant to an explanation of what infiltration there was. Mr. Roy suggests the importance of these factors in his remarks on the backgrounds of various "fellow-traveling" churchmen, but he does not elaborate the point. Had he done so, he would, among other things, have been able to develop in more detail his very interesting observations on the role of anti-Catholicism in American Protestant "fellow-traveling."

Finally, a critical reader might observe that Mr. Roy's chapters on the Russian Orthodox and Armenian churches in America are of only the most indirect relevance to his main argument. Yet these chapters are also among the most interesting and sensitive in the study, and there seems no reason to be too severe a critic of a work that is generally solid and well-balanced.

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THE APPEARANCE of these books coincides with a marked intensification in the Soviet Union both of anti-religious propaganda and of attacks on the institutional foundations of religion (including the closing of houses of worship and imprisonment or exiling of clergymen), a fact which underscores the significance of the problem they treat. No one reading these books, Mr. de Grunwald's work conspicuously excepted, could doubt that relations between communism and religion are inherently unstable. Communism is itself a faith movement committed to universal proselytism and to the conversion of "heretics." It is, at the same time, a political system committed to the destruction of all autonomous social institutions and groups—that is, to the eradication of all focal points for alternative loyalties. These commitments have never been abandoned, although they have sometimes been held in abeyance—even to the point where it was possible for outsiders to sustain the illusion that a "great retreat" was in progress. It is essentially this illusion which Mr. de Grunwald defends and which the renewed assault on religion destroys.

It is even possible that what we are currently witnessing is not just another round in a sporadic struggle but rather the beginning of an all-out offensive. The regime has placed the realization of full-fledged communism squarely on the agenda and has declared anew its intention to liquidate "survivals of the past," among which religion is of course conspicuous. Yet religion is also among the most tenacious of "survivals," and the present regime has shown its reluctance to revert to the tactics of mass terror in pursuing its aims. Probably what religion will have to face is pressure which, if less violent than in the past, is more continuous and unrelenting. The future course of the struggle will require close scrutiny, and the better of the volumes under review—particularly Mr, Kolarz' comprehensive work—ought to provide invaluable background for observers of this critical area of Soviet internal development.

Collaboration in Retrospect

Stalin and the French Communist Party, 1941-1947,
by Alfred J. Rieber,
New York, Columbia University Press, 1962.

Reviewed by Marshall D. Shulman

WHETHER FOR BETTER or for worse, or both, the drama of French political life is rich in recurrent themes, and so there is more than historical interest today in this study of the French Communists and their relations to Soviet policy during the war and the immediate postwar period.

Even from a historical point of view alone, however, this book would be of compelling interest because the period it covers was a fascinating one, full of intriguing questions, of painful political choices, of the slow and wretched deflation of the bright promises of a new world to be built on the ashes of the old.

Professor Rieber, one of the generation of young scholars trained at Columbia University's Russian Institute, has clearly made good use of his opportunities for research and study in the Soviet Union under the graduate exchange program, and for archival and interview research in France, to produce a balanced and carefully-documented answer to some puzzling and important questions.

When the Nazi attack on the Soviet Union released the French Communists from the tortured ambiguity of their position under the Nazi-Soviet Pact, their coiled energy sprang into the Resistance, reveling in the action which so happily combined the interests of the revolution with the balm of patriotism. With care and fairness, Professor Rieber picks his way through the conflicting claims of the Communists and of their detractors about the Communist role in the Resistance. He finds heroism,

Mr. Shulman, who has made a special study of the Communist movement in Western Europe, is Professor of International Politics at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy and Research Associate at the Russian Research Center, Harvard University.

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self-sacrificing dedication and great organizational skill in the Communist contribution to the Resistance, intermixed with inflated claims and ambiguous maneuver for political advantage. His detailed account of the way in which the Communists, through skilled and tireless organizational effort, achieved influence far beyond their actual numbers among the various Resistance groups is an instructive contribution to our understanding of the period. It is also interesting in retrospect to recall how General de Gaulle's obstinacy stood rock-like against wave after wave of Communist efforts to wrest from him dominating positions in the government-in-exile and later in the provisional government.

Were the Communists planning to use their strength in the Resistance and in the Liberation period to take power in France? This was one of the tormenting questions at the time for those Frenchmen who found themselves in a position in which collaboration with the Communists seemed to be necessary in the interests of France. On the basis of his study, Professor Rieber concludes that after the Allied invasion of Europe in 1944, Stalin had no thought of any near realization of his hopes for a Communist France, since in his view the determining factor in local politics was always the identity of the military forces in an area. Whether, in the continued absence of an Allied landing, Soviet forces would have tried to "liberate" France in the Soviet sense of the word, is a question the author leaves in the realm of speculation.

IN ANY CASE, after the signing of the Franco-Soviet Alliance in December 1944 and the absorption of the Communist arm of the Resistance into the regular French forces, it was increasingly clear that the immediate purposes of the Soviet Union and of the French Communist Party were not to subvert the de Gaulle government, but to support it. "To speak of socialism," wrote one Communist at the time, "is to obscure the present task."

The main aim of the French Communists was rather to influence the orientation of French foreign policy. General de Gaulle's vision of France was that of a mediator between East and West. He sought in Moscow a counterweight against the British and the Americans, with whom his relations were always prickly. Stalin, for his part, was quite willing to give minor and mostly verbal support to France's aspirations, in return for which he sought French support of the Lublin government for Poland, the Oder-Neisse line, the Soviet position in Germany, and Soviet hegemony in Eastern Europe; most important, he hoped to keep France from joining with the United States and Great Britain in a new "Western bloc." It is especially interesting today, in the light of present Soviet concern over the European Common Market, to recall that the thought of a "Western bloc" began to assert itself as an obsessive fear in Soviet policies long before the war was over. As early as February 1944 the Soviet Union began to express violent reactions to any suggestion of a new federation of Western Europe. When General de Gaulle foresaw the possibility of a West European economic unit in September 1945, *Pravda* denounced the conception as a genealogical descendant of the *cordon sanitaire* and of the spirit of Munich. The central preoccupation of Soviet policy toward France was thus to keep it from becoming the continental bridgehead for a Western bloc, which in the Soviet view could only be regarded as an instrument directed against Moscow's interests in Europe and elsewhere.

In line with this aim, the French Communists from the spring of 1941 to the spring of 1947 supported and sought to participate in the government of France as much as possible. Drawing on the credit they had earned during the Resistance, they gained electoral strength from the unfulfilled aspirations of French society. They made deals with the Socialists and with the Catholic liberals. They urged the French workers to produce, to hold the line against wage and price increases, and not to strike. They withheld full support for the Algerian and Indo-Chinese nationalist movements, in the interests of the preservation of the French Union.

At the same time, Professor Rieber shows, they were laying the groundwork for a possible later transition in France to some form of "popular democracy." During the chaotic and bloody first days of the liberation, they purged their political enemies as "collaborationists" (including former Communists who had broken with the party at the time of the Nazi-Soviet Pact). They sought to modify the governmental structure of France during the constitutional crises in ways that would facilitate an ultimate transition to Communist power. They entrenched themselves in the labor movement, in the army, and in those parts of the bureaucracy which came under the control of Communist ministers. As early as 1946, the French Communists were talking of "many roads to socialism." Buoyed up with confidence at the party's success in the elections of November 1946, Maurice Thorez gave an interview to the *Times* of London in which he intimated that the path for France might resemble that along which the countries of Eastern Europe were then being led: "The French Workers' Party that we propose to constitute by fusing the Communists and the Socialists would be the guide to our new and popular democracy."

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By the spring of 1947, however, it became clear that this tactic had failed. Finding little real support from the Soviet Union for its aspirations in Germany and badly in need of German coal, France turned decisively away from its neutral role and drew closer to Britain and the United States.

PROFESSOR RIEBER has some light to shed on the interesting circumstances in which the French Communists departed from the French government, to use a neutral word for their mode of exit. The Russians have maintained that the French Communists were forced out by the French bourgeoisie, on orders from the Americans and in return for a larger share of German coal. Many other observers have thought that the Communists could no longer afford to stand with the government against the rising pressure from the working class for wage increases. Professor Rieber comes to the conclusion, however, that they deliberately chose to leave the cabinet primarily because of the international situation. He shows that they arranged a controlled metallurgists' strike to produce the hour and the issue on which to vote against the government.

I find myself not wholly persuaded by Professor Rieber's dismissal of the Communist fear of being "outflanked on the left." The workers' dissatisfaction was in fact an intolerable pressure for a party whose lifeblood comes from working-class support. To have the Renault strikers tearing up their party cards and burning them in giant bonfires in the factory yard because the party was then urging the men to go back to work—this was a traumatic experience for the party leadership. It simply could not have temporized on this issue as it had done on the question of voting credits for the war in Indo-China.[1] The party leadership hoped, however, that its negative vote would oblige the Ramadier government to resign, and that it could then return to the cabinet of a reconstituted government, not anticipating that a constitutional precedent would be set by Ramadier's dismissal of the Communist ministers while himself remaining in power. If international factors had been decisive, it is less likely that the party would have been trying so desperately to get back into the government immediately afterwards.

In any case, this was the end of the period of collaboration. At the founding meeting of the Cominform in September 1947, the French Party, along with the Italian Communists who had been following a parallel line, were instructed to turn toward more militant mass action, to pressure their respective governments away from the Marshall Plan and the Western alliance.

In his assessment of the effectiveness of the party's period of collaboration with the French government, Professor Rieber pronounces it a failure, for despite the Communists' utmost efforts, France moved steadily toward a Western orientation. It is worth recalling that the subsequent period of militant Soviet policy and Communist tactics was even more of a disaster, for as a result of it the party became even more isolated and ineffective, while French domestic politics moved steadily to the right and French foreign policy became more tightly intertwined with that of its allies in the West. Neither with vinegar nor with honey was the French Communist Party able to alter the course of events, but in retrospect, honey appears to have been relatively more successful in giving the party some power and influence.

This leads one to wonder whether the Communists may not draw upon the lessons of their history and return to a period of offering collaboration in the next stage of French political life. If they should, their task will be even more difficult than it was during the 1941-47 period, for at least two reasons. One is the prosperity and dynamism of France within the European Community. And the other is that the truly democratic forces of France have lived through earlier periods of Communist collaboration, and have seen the hook within the bait.

[1] On March 20, 1947, on a motion of confidence in the government over the issue of military credits for the war in Indochina, some Communist deputies to the National Assembly voted for the measure, while other Communist deputies abstained. Jacques Duclos, secretary of the party, explained to the Assembly that this position was taken in order to preserve the existing coalition. Rieber, p. 346.

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Notes and Views

Helsinki—The Last Youth Festival?

AFTER THE Seventh World Youth Festival held in Vienna in 1959, Austrian youth organizations boasted that their program to counter the propaganda effectiveness of the Communists' ten-day extravaganza of songs and dances, political discussions and mass demonstrations, had been such a success that it would drive the festivals back behind the Iron Curtain. Perhaps it was this extravagant claim which was decisive in inspiring the Communist organizers to decide, perversely, to stage another festival in a neutral European country. But whatever the reasons may have been, their decision to hold the Eighth World Festival of Youth and Students for Peace and Friendship in the capital of Finland appears, in retrospect, to have been a major political mistake.

The lack of success of the Helsinki Festival, which took place from July 28 to August 6, 1962, was in fact so patent that it seems to have caused a serious reassessment of the value of the festivals in the entire scheme of Soviet propaganda and "front" activity. When Jiri Pelikan, 40-year-old president of the International Union of Students, intimated that the Helsinki meeting might be the last World Youth Festival, and Jean Garcias, secretary of the International Preparatory Committee, spoke of the need for further such gatherings "whether or not they are held under the Festival name," their remarks were conspicuous straws in the wind.[1]

It already was significant that the Preparatory Committee had scheduled the Eighth Festival to take place three years after the Vienna meeting, whereas all seven festivals from 1947 through 1959 had been held at two-year intervals. Moreover, Secretary Garcias recently indicated that there had been a drastic reduction of the budget for the Helsinki Festival, which evidently slashed expenditures to half what was spent on the Vienna gathering and only one-fourth the amount for the 1957 Moscow Festival, the most lavish and successful of the whole series.[2] This decision to cut costs undoubtedly was one of the factors that contributed to the Eighth Festival's notable lack of success, but there were a number of others that merit attention.

FIRST OF ALL, festival delegates could not help being uncomfortably aware of the hostile attitude of the Finns toward the entire meeting. Whether it was evidenced by the crowd of Finnish youths shouting "Nyet Festival!", by the sea of downturned thumbs that greeted each delegation as it paraded past the Old Student House in the center of Helsinki, or by the rocks and beer bottles that were thrown at festival buses, the expressions of hostility were plain and unmistakable despite the official posture of rigorous neutrality adopted by the Finnish Youth Council and National Union of Students. The Communist press attributed the disturbances to West German "provocateurs," but full police investigation, as well as independent appraisals by observers (including the present writer), clearly established their spontaneous character. An incidental circumstance that may have helped touch off the outbursts was the fact that on the night before the festival opening all places of amusement in Helsinki were closed in observance of the National Day of Prayer. As a result, crowds of young people were on the streets in the center of the city and, with nothing to do, suddenly gave vent

[1] Until 1957 the World Youth Festivals were directly sponsored by the International Union of Students (IUS), with headquarters in Prague, and the World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY), headquartered at Budapest—both Communist front organizations. Since the 1957 Moscow Festival, the official sponsoring organization has been an International Preparatory Committee, but its leading members as well as those of the Permanent Festival Commission are IUS and WFDY officials. On the history and role of the IUS, see John Clews, "Communism's Fourth 'Lever': The Youth and Student Fronts," *Problems of Communism,* No. 6 (Nov.-Dec.), 1956, p. 39.

[2] Various figures have been reported for the size of the Helsinki Festival budget, but Secretary Garcias' figure of $25 million, given at a post-festival meeting of the Preparatory Committee, seems to tally with many of the estimates.

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to their antagonism toward the festival, setting a pattern that could thereafter be checked only by police using tear gas and truncheons.

MORE SERIOUS from the standpoint of the festival's effectiveness was the disaffection of many of the representatives from Asia and Africa, the very ones whom the sponsors were most anxious to impress. In part this was due to the inefficiency and penny-pinching of the organizers—demonstrated, for example, by the fact that without regard for African sensitivity on the score of racial segregation they placed all the English-speaking Africans together in one dormitory miles from the center of town. African and Asian students coming from Eastern Europe also found that they could not change their rubles in Helsinki. But the strongly neutralist nationalism of the Africans and Asians was an even more important factor in causing them to become increasingly critical of the "cold war" character of the festival as the meeting progressed. Some of the African delegates, who at first hesitated to voice their objections for fear of reprisals, were encouraged by the favorable reception given them by the press (including a special daily newspaper published in three languages by an international team under the direction of a Finnish student group) to give open expression to their criticisms of the partisan nature of the festival program. The most dramatic manifestation of neutralist dissatisfaction was the walk-out of all 46 non-Communist members of the Ceylonese delegation in protest against being "systematically exploited for purposes of cold war politics." Other protests of a similar nature were voiced publicly by representatives of Nigeria, Uganda, and Indonesia, and privately by many others.

The fact that the Latin American delegations did not join in the chorus of neutral criticism may be attributed largely to the fact that, with the exception of some members of the delegations from Brazil and Chile, virtually all the Latin American participants were convinced Communists or Fidelistas. From Asia and Africa, by contrast, the festival organizers had succeeded in eliciting the participation of highly respectable nationalist groups—a move which, though it raised the advance prestige of the festival, made the criticisms voiced by these groups during and after the Helsinki meeting all the more telling. This brings out a difficult dilemma that now faces the sponsors of the festivals: either they will have to restrict participation in future festivals to already convinced fellow travelers, or else they are likely to find that Afro-Asian neutralist nationalism will no longer tolerate the kind of one-sided Communist control that has hitherto made the festivals so useful for their purposes. Formerly, the single-minded preoccupation of African and Asian nationalists with liberation from colonial control tended to make them less critical of this aspect of the festivals. Recently, however, such nationalist leaders as Nasser of Egypt and Nkrumah of Ghana have adopted an attitude of cool reserve toward the festivals, and many delegates who went to Helsinki from other uncommitted countries displayed an inclination to be sharply and openly critical.

The walk-out of the non-Communist Ceylonese delegates was encouraged and assisted by the International Union of Socialist Youth, which set up a headquarters in a downtown Helsinki hotel and carried on some effective work among the democratic socialist delegates attending the festival from the non-aligned countries. According to festival officials, fifteen such outside groups were active on the fringes of the festival, including a large Swiss delegation with its own exhibit on Swiss democracy, a group from Yale University which sponsored a show of American modern art and two jazz clubs, and an international team under Dutch-Swiss auspices which opened a night club for the delegates aboard a ship anchored in the harbor near the center of town. Political exiles from Communist Eastern Europe, several religious groups, and some lone pacifists also grasped the opportunity to preach their views to any of the 10,000 festival participants who would listen.

Many of these groups had been active at the Vienna Festival and had profited from their successes and failures there to improve their methods of work: generally speaking, their activities at Helsinki gave less ground for Communist charges of "anti-Festival" sabotage than at Vienna, where the Soviet delegation had chanted *"Anti-Festival kaput, das ist gut, das ist gut!"* at the closing parade. In fact, a number of the participating delegations from neutral countries, whose members had had to pay their own way to the meeting, (*e.g.*, the delegations from Senegal, Morocco, Tunisia, and part of the Indian group) were quite ready to criticize the festival without outside encouragement. In addition, the outside groups found support among some of the American, British, Dutch, German, Australian, and Canadian delegates, who were interested in minimizing Soviet political exploitation of the festival.[3]

IT WAS THE SOVIETS themselves, however, who struck perhaps the most damaging blow at the festival by the extraordinarily bad timing of their renewal of nuclear testing, which came one day before the end of the meeting. Zengakuren, the left-wing Japanese student federation which had been an enthusiastic participant in past festivals,

[3] The attendance, on an individual basis, of a number of highly-qualified Americans, mostly students, had been actively encouraged by the Independent Research Service, an organization established by a group of Harvard University professors and students before the 1959 Vienna Festival to provide information to festival participants and publish reports before and after future festivals. On the Vienna Festival, see Morton Schwartz, "Moscow's Experimental Venture: The Vienna World Youth Festival," *Problems of Communism*, No. 5 (Sept.-Oct.), 1959, p. 53.

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Jean Garcias (left), Secretary-General of the Festival Committee, and an aide forcibly restrain a young Icelander who tried to march in the closing parade of the Helsinki Festival, the day after the firing of a new Soviet nuclear test blast, carrying a placard reading "Stop the Tests in East and West." The placard, torn in half by Garcias, lies on the pavement.

had not been invited to the Helsinki meeting because of its intense opposition to all testing. However, following the Soviet action,[4] representatives of the Danish Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament organized an international protest on the last day of the festival, attempting to join in the closing festival parade carrying banners which read "No More Tests, East or West." On this occasion, Festival Secretary Garcias was caught by a news photographer as he personally intervened to destroy one of the banners being carried by an Icelandic delegate, and the picture, carried in the world press, dramatically emphasized the conflict between the so-called open stand of the festival organizers and the reality of Communist political control.[5]

The same pro-Soviet partisanship had already been evidenced during the festival proceedings by the organizers' careful control of the lists of speakers permitted to address the seminars on peace, colonialism, and other political topics. When criticisms of Communist manipulation of the festival reached their peak at the close of the proceedings, the organizers made a belated attempt to counter the charges by arranging a special meeting of the much-criticized "Free Student Tribune" at which, for the first time, a free and open discussion was permitted.

The political meetings were, to be sure, only a small part of the festival program, which included literally hundreds of cultural presentations, athletic events, and inter-delegation gatherings. But it was at the political meetings that the important statements were made which could be given worldwide publicity via Communist-controlled communications media. Two hundred delegates, for instance, attended a twelve-hour seminar on colonialism at the conclusion of which a declaration was read and adopted over the objections of a minority who protested that their views had been ignored. That evening, the Soviet and East German radios were broadcasting the declaration as a statement of the opinion of the 10,000 festival delegates.

Those delegates who were not interested or were unwilling to participate in the political discussions had a wide choice of non-political events to divert them, both within and outside the Festival. Although the trilingual newspaper mentioned earlier saw to it that they were kept aware of the political character of the festival discussions, and though an occasional inebriated Finn encountered on the street might subject them to a lecture (in Finnish) on the evils of communism, they could otherwise steer clear of the politics of the meeting. The inter-delegation social gatherings offered drinks, songs, dances, and the opportunity to meet young people from distant countries—and the political and propaganda aims of the festival organizers could be ignored. Thus, despite the political overtones and the coolness of the Finns, many of the delegates did enjoy themselves and went away with a favorable impression of their stay in Helsinki. Especially those whose travel to and from the meeting was paid for out of the Festival "Solidarity Fund" (and supplemented in some cases by gala tours of the USSR and Eastern Europe) were understandably disinclined to criticize the sponsors or to acknowledge that the festival was a failure.

[4] This is not the only instance in which Communist front activity has been sacrificed to higher-priority Soviet policies. Following the Soviet-Yugoslav break, the Yugoslav youth and student organizations were ejected from the IUS and WFDY despite the damage done to the claim of these bodies to represent the youth and students of the world. Again, at the time of the Slansky purges in Czechoslovakia, the Czech president of the IUS was abruptly removed from office, and when a British delegate to a subsequent IUS meeting moved a vote of thanks to the ousted official for his services, he was informed that "the IUS is not a thanks-giving organization."

[5] Cover pictures and favorable articles on the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament had appeared in 1961 (Nos. 6 and 8-9) issues of the *World Student News*, official publication of the IUS, and a brochure entitled "Sixteen Questions and Answers about the IUS," which was handed out at the Helsinki Festival, again expressed IUS support of nuclear disarmament.

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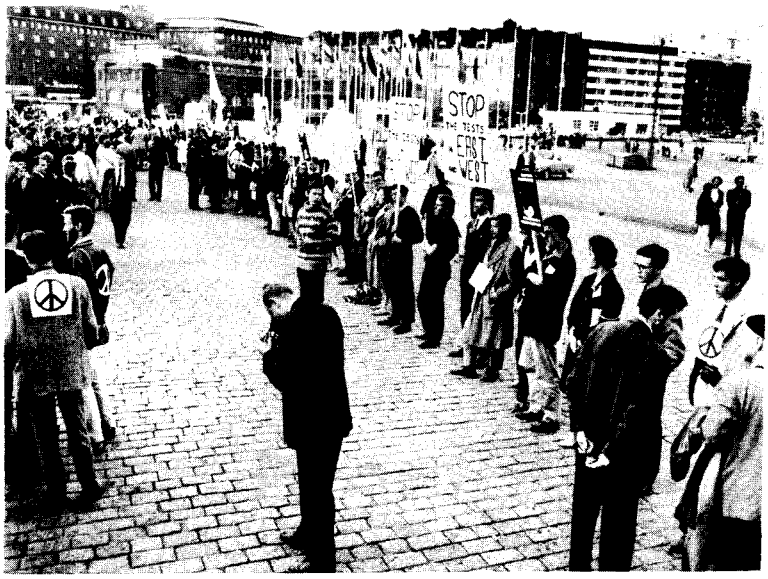
Even from the viewpoint of the organizers, conscious though they must be of the lack of success of many aspects of the festival program, the Helsinki meeting probably cannot be termed a complete failure. If past festivals are any guide, an elaborate propaganda film of the festivities is doubtless in preparation, to be shown throughout the world. Also, the list of participants, especially from Africa, was impressive. Although Nkrumah refused at the last moment to allow the Ghanaian Young Pioneers to send a delegation and Nigeria was likewise unrepresented, the vast majority of important African youth organizations sent either official representatives or observers. Moreover, though both Nehru and Nasser took a reserved stand regarding participation in the festival, fourteen representatives of the Indian Youth Congress and an 80-member cultural and athletic group from the United Arab Republic were present at Helsinki. There was also an imposing Senegalese delegation of 103 members (of whom, however, 96 afterwards toured West Germany, as did many of the Tunisian, Moroccan, and Guinean festival delegates).

NEVERTHELESS, when evaluation of the results of the Eighth Festival began at a special meeting in Warsaw, held from August 11 to 13, and also—presumably—among interested officials in Moscow, there were a number of factors to be weighed that argued against a continuation of the pattern which the World Youth Festivals have followed since their inception in 1947:

1) When the festivals were initiated, they were one of the few instrumentalities for bringing substantial numbers of young people from Asia, Africa, and Latin America into contact with the Soviet Union and the East European countries. Continuing colonial control and the absence of diplomatic relations kept Soviet influence from reaching some of these areas, except through the various Communist-sponsored front organizations of youth and students, rendered more attractive by the proffer of free travel to the World Youth Festivals. Now, there are Soviet embassies and trade missions in most of these areas; there are students from Africa, Asia, and Latin America studying at the Patrice Lumumba Friendship University in Moscow (not all of them as disenchanted as the African student leaders who quit Moscow two years ago, and who came to the Helsinki Festival to denounce its Communist sponsorship); and there are outposts of Communist influence in Cuba, in Guinea (at least until the end of 1961), and potentially, perhaps, in Guiana under Cheddi Jagan. All this has somewhat lessened the need for the festivals.

2) The festivals also were useful in former years to give the youth of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union an illusion of outside contact at a time when Stalin's xenophobia prevented any meaningful exchange with the non-Communist world. Now, under Khrushchev, foreign tourism in the Soviet Union has increased; the East European countries, especially Poland, have substantially expanded their contacts with the West; and various types of East-West exchange have lessened the isolation of the Communist world—all of which also makes the Youth Festivals less necessary.

3) As the Helsinki meeting indicated, a militant and highly sensitive attitude of neutralist nationalism has come to replace the emotional one-sidedly anti-Western brand of anti-colonialism formerly displayed by representatives of the developing areas. This old type of anti-colonialism lent itself readily to exploitation in furtherance of Soviet foreign policy aims. However, the African or Asian neutral-nationalist of today tends to be more objectively critical of both sides in the Cold War and to resent the crude attempts habitually made to exploit the Youth Festivals and his participation therein for Communist propaganda purposes.



Members of the "Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament" group, left behind in Helsinki's Hakaniemi Square after being barred from participation in the Youth Festival's closing parade for "peace." In the words of one of the group, Festival officials banned signs reading "Stop the Tests in East and West" because such messages "really are neutral."

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4) In the case of Africa, the local youth and student front groups cultivated by the Communists with the aid of the Youth Festivals have been more or less swallowed up in the nationalistic one-party states created during the last five years. Who goes or does not go to the festivals is decided by the government and the government-sponsored youth organization, and little can be done by the festival organizers to influence the selection. If they attempt to do so by manipulating the distribution of travel grants, this incurs resentment, as evidenced by the protests made by some of the delegates at Helsinki.

5) The festivals have hitherto been utilized to provide participants in international meetings of other Communist front groups scheduled either just before or afterwards. This year, for example, a number of the delegations to the Helsinki Festival first attended the World Peace Council session held in Moscow in early July, and some also went to the post-festival meetings of the WFDY and IUS in Warsaw and Leningrad, respectively. Yet one may question whether it was worthwhile to bring 10,000 young people to Helsinki for the sake of assuring adequate participation in meetings where the attendance ranged only from 500 to 800. In many ways, gatherings of the type of the Youth Forum held in Moscow in the summer of 1961, where the attendance was about 700, seem capable of accomplishing as much as the Youth Festivals without requiring anything like the same vast expenditure of time and money.

6) Finally, if another World Youth Festival is to take place, the organizers face a difficult problem regarding the site. Already at the time Helsinki was decided upon as the site of the 1962 festival, the Cuban representative on the Preparatory Committee was persuaded only with difficulty to withdraw his bid on behalf of Havana. Castro is again proposing Havana for the next festival, and his bid appears to have the support of all but those committee members directly controlled by the USSR. In spite of this increased pressure, it is doubtful that the Soviet Union will be willing to gamble in advance upon the continued existence and the dependability of the Castro regime. Although Soviet influence in Cuba is great, it seems that the Soviet leaders regard Castro as uncontrollable, emotional, and even dangerous. Financially, too, a full-scale Youth Festival in Havana would entail excessive outlays for transporting the delegations from Eastern and Western Europe. The Bulgarian capital of Sofia might be a feasible alternative, especially since no Youth Festival has yet been held there, but Moscow may find it difficult to persuade the International Preparatory Committee to pass over Havana a second time.

These are the major elements of the crisis now confronting the organizers of the World Youth Festivals. A possible solution might be the substitution of regional festivals or youth forums which could carry on the tradition and work of the World Festivals without, perhaps, inviting the same problems. And even if another World Festival should take place, it is likely to be conducted very differently from the one in Helsinki or its predecessors. But it still remains to be seen whether the present crisis is serious enough to bring about the demise of the most colorful and ambitious of the programs conducted by the "transmission belts" of Soviet propaganda.

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MAO'S ORIGINALITY

TO THE EDITORS: May I comment on Professor George Taylor's review of my book, *The Hundred Flowers Campaign and the Chinese Intellectuals,* in your issue of September-October 1961?

Discussing my analysis of Mao's "contradictions" speech, Professor Taylor says:

Actually, according to Mao, the contradictions speech had been written twenty years earlier; and it was most certainly a rehash of Soviet writings.

Certainly when Mao made his speech in 1957, the general subject of "contradictions" was familiar both to him and to Soviet theoreticians. But his speech *did* contain one major novelty, a novelty which was indeed the essence of his speech, a novelty which Mr. Khrushchev felt compelled to reject, as a quotation in my book (p. 306) shows. This novelty was the assertion that in a Communist state there could exist contradictions, albeit "non-antagonistic," between leaders and led. I need hardly elaborate on the importance of this formulation in a journal like *Problems of Communism;* my own views on it have anyway been expressed in the introduction to my book. To the best of my knowledge, this formulation had been expressed only once prior to Mao's February 1957 speech—almost in passing—in the Chinese commentary on the crisis in Eastern Europe, entitled "More on the Historical Experience of the Proletarian Dictatorship" (*People's Daily,* December 29, 1956), an article which gave the first big hint of the extent of Mao's rethinking. If Professor Taylor is able to locate this concept in any of Mao's earlier writings or in those of Soviet ideologues, he will be adding greatly to our understanding and knowledge of Mao's thinking.

Professor Taylor's interpretation of the events of the "hundred flowers" movement is apparently that Mao played a trick. He is, of course, perfectly entitled to this view and to point out that it is shared by Mr. Chow Ching-wen (whose book *Ten Years of Storm* he also reviewed). But I feel it should be pointed out that Mr. Chow did not "personally live through" the developments of 1957 as Professor Taylor says—presumably with the implication that the man on the spot would of course know best. In fact, Mr. Chow, having described the developments of February-June 1957, then says: "At that time, I had already come to Hong Kong . . . " (pp. 163-4).

One final minor point, which I make only because Professor Taylor's comments seem to suggest I have made a somewhat elementary mistake. Professor Taylor suggests that the origin of the phrase "Let a hundred flowers bloom" is in the *Ching Hua Yuan* and then states that I refer to it as Mao's own invention. In fact I said only that it was *"apparently* coined by Mao" (emphasis now added). Not being familiar with the whole gamut of classical Chinese writings, I certainly did not wish to lay down the law on this point—though, when I wrote, no other Sinologist had suggested that the phrase was other than Mao's. Professor Taylor's suggestion is certainly an interesting one, if debatable.

RODERICK MACFARQUHAR
Editor, *China Quarterly*
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PROFESSOR TAYLOR REPLIES: I think that when Mr. MacFarquhar says that Mao's 1957 speech contained a major novelty, he has something of a point. Mao certainly added a new twist to stale dogma when he spoke of the possibility of non-antagonistic contradictions between leaders and led. But Mao did not say that this might occur under "a Communist state," as Mr. MacFarquhar says, but under "socialism." The idea that non-antagonistic contradictions can occur under socialism was made by Mao in his lecture "On Contradictions" in 1937. Mao there cited Lenin as the author of this idea; and Lenin's thesis had been, of course, cited prior to that time in Soviet writings; it was reproduced in China in Chinese not later than 1936. So it is not, after all, much of a point.

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YUGOSLAVIA TODAY

TO THE EDITORS: As one who holds an LL.B. degree from the University of Belgrade (1955), and is writing a Ph.D. dissertation on the Yugoslav economy . . . I feel obliged to extend my sincere congratulations to Mr. Paul Landy on his article "Reforms in Yugoslavia" published in the November-December 1961 issue of *Problems of Communism*.

The article contains three important elements rarely found together: (1) It is well-documented; (2) Its author has successfully freed himself from any ideological bias—often the most difficult obstacle in presenting a realistic picture of so controversial a subject as the dynamics of a Communist state; and (3) Its conclusions show, clearly and correctly, that Yugoslavia is now at the crossroads. Further decentralization of its economy may lead toward weakening of political control, and . . . as time goes by, it may become increasingly difficult for those who have been in favor of bureaucratic control . . . to effectuate the return to rigid centralism.

Which way the country goes in the future will depend on a number of internal and external factors. Mr. Landy's greatest contribution lies in bringing to public attention the complexity of the problems faced by the Yugoslav government today.

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